

## NEWS

SGA shares their plans for 2022, including a focus on accessibility and laundry changes.



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Kennedy Kanagawa '08 on his Broadway debut.



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How a book transformed this author's sense of identity.

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## Orientation reorients under Tim Black

Tim Black took over orientation responsibilities from Steve Dutton who left last spring.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUHLENBERG DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

Senior orientation leaders smile in anticipation of the Class of 2026's arrival.

# Monkeypox at Muhlenberg

By KATHERINE CONLON  
CO-NEWS EDITOR

The Monkeypox outbreak has made its way onto Muhlenberg's campus and was reported on Sept. 7 in an email from Dean of Students Allison Williams. "A person who was on campus last week self-reported a recent positive test for monkeypox. The individual is not a student and does not live on campus. The person is now in isolation," stated Williams in the message. As cases of monkeypox increase on the national and global scale, the College is implementing measures to cope with the potential spread of the virus among the student body.

Monkeypox is an infectious disease which results in, "blisters on the skin filled with pus and fluid. These blisters may be localized in one area or dispersed around the body. They are often very painful. Other symptoms may include fever, headache, muscle aches, swollen lymph nodes and fatigue," according to Director and Associate Professor of Public Health Chrysan Cronin, Ph.D.

There are a wide array of misunderstandings surrounding the spread of the virus; Cronin noted that, "there is a common misconception that Monkeypox can only be spread through close personal contact. While this is one way to transmit the disease,

we know that contact with saliva... can also spread the disease. In addition, the virus can live on inanimate objects such as sheets, towels, and clothing and can spread if these objects are shared with others."

A widely-held belief that has taken hold as monkeypox has proliferated is that the disease is a sexually transmitted infection (STI). Cronin dispels this saying, "monkeypox is neither an STI or a 'gay disease.' When the first reports came out, the disease was predominantly seen in men who have sex with men. But as we know from experiencing other viral outbreaks, viruses are non-discriminatory and will infect whoever happens to be available.

We need to be sure that people in positions of authority who communicate information about monkeypox give information that is correct."

In a conversation with The Weekly, Williams outlined Muhlenberg's procedure for potential cases among the student population. Williams stated that, "students who test positive for monkeypox must isolate away from campus from the onset of symptoms until the rash has healed, all scabs have fallen off and a fresh layer of skin has formed. This is typically a 2-4 week time period." The process of contact tracing was also noted.

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# President Eber '23 shares what's in store for 'Berg

By MATTHEW BARESH  
CO-NEWS EDITOR

SGA's new initiatives for the academic year.

The Student Government Association's (SGA) new president Benjamin Eber '23 is optimistic about what this school year holds. Elected in May 2022, Eber has created an outline of what he would like to accomplish during his time as student body president, including ways to get students more involved in the college community. "Expect a plethora of events promoting the

many ways students can become involved in changing our campus through SGA," Eber said.

One of SGA's first goals is to provide free menstrual products for students. Eber explains, "Right now, we are in our test trial phase with our Flo-free pad and tampon dispensers in Seegers Union bathrooms, with the hopes of continuing to grow. Academic buildings are

the next step." While there are menstrual product dispensers in other bathrooms across campus, each item has a cost making them not entirely accessible to all students. Additionally, most of those machines are currently empty.

"I hope the test trial goes well and this will be implemented in

SEE **SGA** PAGE 4



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

08/13/2022 Hoffman House: Report of keys locked in vehicle, Campus Safety Officer successfully retrieved keys.	student, Allentown EMS responded, student refused further treatment or transport. Liberty Street: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student refused further treatment or transport. Village Upper Lot: Report of minor motor vehicle accident causing minor damage to bumper, individuals exchanged information, no further incident.
08/14/2022 Life Sports Center: Report of injured student, student taken to hospital by Cetronia EMS. South Hall: Report of fire alarm from cooking, system silenced and reset.	
08/17/2022 Chew Street: Report of keys locked in vehicle, Campus Safety Officer successfully retrieved keys.	08/27/2022 N. 22nd Street: Report of bat in residence, bat removed by Campus Safety Officer. Life Sports Center: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, individual refused further treatment or transport.
08/19/2022 Chew Street (2100 BLK): Report of bat in room, bat removed by Campus Safety Officer.	09/03/2022 Commuter Lots: Report of alcohol violation, Officers from PA State Police Liquor Control issued citations. Gordon and 22nd Streets: Report of alcohol violation, Officers from PA State Police Liquor Control issued citations. Gordon and 22nd Streets: Report of alcohol violation, Officers from PA State Police Liquor Control issued citations. Liberty and 22nd Streets: Report of alcohol violation, Officers from PA State Police Liquor Control issued citations.
08/23/2022 Walson Hall: Report of injured employee, individual transported to hospital by family member. Off Campus Location: Report of minor motor vehicle accident causing minor damage to College vehicle, no further incident.	
08/24/2022 Prosser Hall: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student refused further treatment or transport.	
08/25/2022 Martin Luther Hall: Report of sick	

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# Controversial COVID policy

BY CYDNEY WILSON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

As of Sept. 13, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) website states, "If you test positive for COVID-19, stay home for at least five days and isolate from others in your home." In direct contradiction, Muhlenberg's COVID policy states, "Most residential students who test positive for COVID will remain in their assigned on-campus residence for the duration of their required isolation period, unless their roommate (or suitemate) indicates that they are at high risk for severe COVID symptoms... Students isolating in their residence will be required to follow CDC guidelines and practices that reduce exposure to their roommates and others."

These guidelines have been both troubling and confusing for students on campus, many of whom are testing positive. Students who are positive for COVID and living in a traditional double room with a roommate are expected to stay in that room, even if their roommate tests negative. It's a policy which students such as Paige Weisburg '22 say, "Puts the whole campus at risk and it's also terrifying."

Dean of Students Allison Williams says, "Better understanding of the COVID-19 virus, vaccinations and changes that have occurred due to the variants have allowed us to adjust our response to COVID-19. We have worked closely with the Department of Health, our local infectious disease experts, and the American College Health Association to make our decisions."

The main justification for keeping a positive roommate in the same room as one who has yet to be positive, as explained by Williams, "[is] based on what we know about the rapid transmission rate of the current omicron variant. Roommates of positive students may likely test positive also and have already been exposed at the point at which a student is testing positive."

However, the CDC website states, "You are likely most infectious during these first five days." Therefore, if a 'Berg student tests positive on day two, there is still a chance they may infect their roommate.

Ariana Handelman '25 says she feels, "Absolutely disgusted [at] the fact that you are expected to and forced to sleep



Sam Pfeffer '24 and Marissa Scharf '24 demonstrate COVID safety with a smile (behind their masks!)

in the same room as an actively COVID-positive person if you are roommates."

Additionally, given that there is no method to reinforce existing guidelines when it comes to being a close-contact for COVID, they often go ignored. Handelman shares, "People who know they are close contacts are maybe testing once and determining that they are fine to walk around without a mask."

In addition to these feelings of frustration, many students have also expressed a desire for the return of a COVID dashboard on campus. Williams explained the College's reasoning for not having one saying, "The purpose of the COVID-19 dashboard was to provide accurate data on COVID infection rates and test positivity rates on our campus. The data was most useful when the College was performing regular surveillance testing (meaning mandatory testing of asymptomatic students) and when testing was primarily performed by the College. Two major developments occurred since the dashboard's inception that has led the College to discontinue its use: the widespread availability of over-the-counter antigen tests and the change to testing symptomatic individuals only. Any current data that the College would report on its dashboard may not be an accurate reflection of what is actually occurring in our community, as we would now be rely-

ing heavily on self report and also some with symptoms may choose not to test (which we strongly discourage)."

However, students have still expressed frustration, as some idea of an on-campus positivity rate is better than none. "I'd feel a lot better if the school still kept a public record of case statistics," says Matan Kogen '23. The sentiment was echoed by Grace Nyberg '23, "I really want the dashboard back. It also just helps clear up confusion."

College leadership has repeatedly expressed that there will be situations which may need to be handled on a case-by-case basis. Williams says, "Recognizing the need to support our most vulnerable students who have a medical condition causing them to be [at] higher risk for severe COVID infection, there continues to be the option for relocation during the isolation period to decrease the risk of transmission to these students."

Williams shared that high-risk conditions include "cancer, chronic kidney disease, chronic liver disease, chronic lung disease, diabetes, heart conditions, immunocompromised, sickle cell disease and transplants. This list is not exhaustive and does not include all possible conditions that would put students in a higher risk category."

She also elaborated on what exactly the available isolation spaces are, "We have

a limited number of spaces available on campus as needed for isolation purposes. So those spaces are available at no additional cost to the student. If a student's request is not approved for a move to a different isolation space, and they do not wish to remain in their room based on personal preference, they may go home or go off campus on their own."

Annaliese Collins '23, a public health major and one of the interns for Peer Health Advocates at Muhlenberg shared their opinion on the policy. "I am very disappointed with the decisions made by the College surrounding the COVID-19 policy... The lack of access to isolation housing, the absence of the dashboard, and the general hostility towards mask-required spaces is the perfect storm for a surge in cases and a fading trust in the capabilities of the College. If we can't trust the College to handle a pandemic that has been going on since 2020, how do we trust their decision-making in the next one? How do we trust them if monkeypox makes its way to campus?"

The College and its students seem to be on vastly different pages when it comes to addressing the ongoing pandemic, and it may behoove both parties to work together to prevent the spread. Collins says, "public health isn't about the individual, it's about the community."

## Controversial COVID policy: Isolating with a positive roommate

BY CYDNEY WILSON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Maryn Pryor '23 and Laura Fisher '23, two roommates in a double, share their frustration in regards to the College's mishandling of their return to campus. Fisher, who is from Seattle, Washington, contracted COVID-19 on a Muhlenberg class trip to Maine.

Fisher was still testing positive for COVID-19 on the day she was supposed to move in. Pryor, who is from California, explains, "Friday comes around and we're

both supposed to move in and both calling Housing and the Health Center trying to figure out some way that the two of us don't have to stay in the same room while she has COVID and we have pre-orientation starting on Sunday. Neither of us have anywhere else to go. Housing keeps saying to talk to the Health Center and the Health Center keeps saying to talk to housing and then they both say the policy is to let us both move into the double but that's all they can do. This is frustrating because all of the other bedrooms [in the

Village] are locked so, even though our roommates in the singles are fine with one of us staying in their rooms/ Housing is telling us we can't because they haven't moved in yet."

Furthermore, when Fisher attempted to move into her college housing, she was not allowed to get her key because she was testing positive, even though the College was aware of her COVID-positive status beforehand. It took several attempts for Pryor and Fisher to get permission for Fisher to move in, despite there being no

isolation housing provided and no possibility for Fisher to fly home to Seattle. When Fisher and Pryor were allowed to move in, the College still refused to unlock any of the singles in their suite, and they were forced to share the double even though there were safer options easily available. This is a prime example of the College's inflexibility when it comes to prioritizing the safety of students.



## FROM SGA PAGE 1

full super soon,” said Britney Bonhomme ‘24. “I know that Seegers Union bathrooms get the most traffic on campus so this is perfect thinking. I can’t wait to see where it goes.”

Continuing the theme of accessibility, SGA has plans to make all buildings across campus more accessible through the installation of ramps or elevators. “A variety of buildings and pathways on this campus are not accessible to many,” said Eber. “We plan to check accessible doors to ensure they are working, note buildings without proper elevators, and investigate what stages have ramps and other accessibility paths. These findings will then be reported to Plant Operations and senior staff to find solutions where needed.”

For those who have cars, it’s no secret that the parking situation on campus can be frustrating. Eber wants to help alleviate this problem and make parking more accessible and convenient for all. “Many students have voiced their annoyance in having to park their car across campus from where they live,” Eber shared. “I want to talk with the administration and see how parking is delegated and see if there is a reasonable solution.”

Cydney Wilson ‘23 shared, “Parking on campus is extremely frustrating, and students are frequently ticketed. Ticketing financially benefits the College, while harming students, and rather than continuing to profit

off of us, it would be great if they tried instead to find a solution.”

Eber also showed a specific interest in the student clubs on campus, pushing for more club storage and funding. Eber reasoned, “Clubs are growing in numbers and in resources they need. As they grow and acquire equipment, we want to find a place for them to store their club’s property that isn’t just their car or dorm room, which will help prevent missing equipment as well. We are also working on funding clubs in the most ethical and reasonable way, as this year has the potential to be our fullest year yet when it comes to club-hosted events.”

“[The new spaces] could be really beneficial to have designated places to store equipment,” shared Serena Albahary ‘24. “This way things are all in one spot and easy to find. As co-president of the intramural volleyball club, it would be beneficial to have somewhere to store the equipment speakers when we purchase them.”

Eber also has plans to work closely with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee to hold campus-wide DEI chair meetings, dinners and much more. “We’re having our General Assembly DEI training this week, as we welcome our new representatives,” Eber said. SGA recently held a special election that introduced many first-year members to the association.

As always, laundry was brought into the conversation in terms of its affordability for

students. With the price of \$1.50 per load of laundry, the total cost adds up over a student’s time here at the College. “This is the age-old discussion of how do we make laundry cheaper, or is that even possible? Now, laundry will never be free, but I want to re-run the numbers and talk with our suppliers to see what the options are moving forward.” The future of laundry may look brighter for ‘Berg students and their wallets.

SGA collectively agrees that there is so much potential for the College this year. Eber has also been working on other questions, including, “How can we get more gender-neutral bathrooms in dorms and around campus? Should we extend Java Joe’s hours? Do the commuter lockers need to be redone?” Eber has a positive outlook for the upcoming 2022-23 academic year and a well-thought-out list of improvements that could be made.

“There is much more work to be done, and SGA wants to keep up with student movements and concerns. I want it to be known that SGA is a resource, and we are going to remind the campus community of this until every single person knows,” said Eber. “We look forward to a great semester!”

## FROM MONKEYPOX PAGE 1

“Students who have been identified as having a direct known exposure to monkeypox will be given information about symptom monitoring, when and how to seek testing and information about vaccination,” stated Williams. However, if a student who tests positive is unable to isolate off campus, on-campus isolation housing will be provided.

Currently, access to the vaccine for monkeypox is operating on a limited roll out. Cronin emphasized this stating, “Individuals who are most vulnerable to getting and transmitting the disease have priority. The vaccine is so scarce that the FDA has approved dividing up a single dose into five separate individual doses so that more people can get immunized.” The monkeypox vaccine, however, is effective after exposure, according to Cronin. “It can be effective even after exposure so if you know you have been exposed, you should get the vaccine immediately.”

The College has historically provided vaccination clinics for illnesses such as influenza and COVID-19. In response to an inquiry about whether Muhlenberg would provide similar services for monkeypox, Williams said, “as the monkeypox vaccine becomes more available, we will notify our community of vaccination clinics occurring both locally and on our campus. This is an important issue for college students, so we will be vigilantly working to offer these clinics as soon as it is possible to do so.”

Muhlenberg’s student body has mixed opinions regarding the College’s response to the virus. “It is important to consider the extra precautions that... Muhlenberg College could institute to minimize the spread of the disease. For example, ensuring that there are proper disinfectant cleaning supplies in all college classrooms and spaces will ensure that students and staff can wipe down surfaces before and after classes, events, or other sessions... monkeypox exposures can be mitigated by proper sanitation efforts and continued educational outreach,” said Nour Yousry ‘23.

While she agreed with the College’s strict isolation policy, Esther Klinger ‘25 illustrated some distress surrounding the severity of the potential circulation of the virus on Muhlenberg’s campus, “It is very stressful to have to take a 2-4 week leave of absence—I fall behind after missing just one class.” Klinger also illustrated her thoughts on Muhlenberg’s promise of increased sanitation saying, “the College also stated that they would routinely clean showers, toilets and sinks, but honestly I don’t think the showers in my residence hall have been cleaned in weeks. Based off that and how poorly enforced the COVID masking [and] close-contact policies were last year, I don’t think the College is going to be very strict in enforcing the monkeypox policies it has supposedly put in place.”

# Orientation reorients under Tim Black

BY MATTHEW KLINGER  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

This semester, Muhlenberg orientation introduced Tim Black as the new Director of Student Transitions and Family Programs. Previously, Black served as an area director for Housing and Residence Life. Third-year Orientation Leader (OL) Lily Knowles ‘23 says that, “Tim really stepped up to the plate to fill the position... [he] brought amazing energy to the space and gave us the freedom to shape the program.”

Orientation Team Leader (OTL), Shira Holtz ‘24 echoed Knowles’ enthusiasm, saying, “I really liked working with Tim. He knew how to support us as OTLs and fully recognized that this was his first time experiencing Muhlenberg orientation. He

reminded us that training in particular didn’t have to be the same as last year, but also recognized why we felt it was important to keep a lot of things the same.”

This year’s orientation brought about a few notable changes to the program. The biggest alteration was creating a separate program for summer advising so that OLs could focus exclusively on Orientation Weekend. Black also worked with OTLs to create a program for both the week-long orientation training and Orientation Weekend that really highlighted students teaching their peers. For the training, Black split the OTLs into pairs. Each pair was then tasked with creating a presentation about a topic they felt was not traditionally well covered. This allowed for a better orientation because the OTLs were able to use their experience as OLs in prior years to really

understand what worked and what needed to be changed. This was different from years prior when guest speakers with no direct involvement in the process would run large portions of the training. Knowles says that, “It was really nice for the OTLs to work together to put together an inclusive and personal program.”

The biggest change for orientation was not related to the change in leadership. Due to COVID-19, the last two years of orientation were limited, with orientation in 2020 being exclusively conducted over Zoom and masks being required in 2021. Knowles described Orientation 2020 as being exhausting and long, to the point that she almost did not reapply. Even last year, there were a number of challenges and changes, despite orientation being held in-person.

In 2022, the changes implemented by Black and the OTLs helped return orientation to normalcy or at least a new version of it. Knowles added, “This year things felt way more settled in terms of COVID-19, but also because of the fact that OTLs have known the program and the bumps on the road, so this year felt really solid and like we could focus on what matters during orientation: connection, welcoming and fun!”

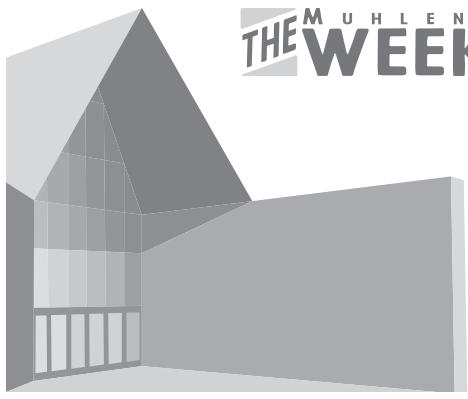
Mayu Lee ‘24 says, “Orientation starts me off with sixty-something wonderful connections before school starts. Spending a week with a group of people that want to be here with each other and create a great atmosphere, not only for incoming students but for also ourselves, makes the beginning of the school year 100 times better! It might be a little cheesy, but I know that I’ve made lifelong

friends through the process, and have made connections with people that will always have my back.”

OLs and OTLs were not the only ones who had positive things to say about orientation this year. Freshmen also saw the changes have a positive impact on their transition to college. Rebecca Cohen ‘26 said, “Orientation was so much fun. It was so weird and random but I loved it. It definitely helped to have a schedule every day to help ease you into college but it was definitely a busier schedule than regular college.”

Lyam Shook ‘26, a commuting student, also had a positive experience, saying, “I thought orientation was helpful. I just wished they had promoted it more beforehand because I missed a part of it because of work.”





"Art, in itself, is an attempt to bring order out of chaos."  
- Stephen Sondheim

## Alumus moo-ved Broadway with debut

PHOTO BY JOHNNY VEGLIA



BY JOHNNY VEGLIA  
CO-ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

The Weekly's own Johnny Veglia '24 sat down to interview Broadway actor and Muhlenberg alum Kennedy Kanagawa '08.

"Into the Woods" is an iconic musical and a powerful story for children of all ages, with an impressive revival currently on Broadway with new cast members, such as Stephanie J. Block as The Baker's Wife and Krysta Rodriguez as Cinderella. The highly acclaimed revival dedicated to Stephen Sondheim has been delighting audiences over the course of its production at the St. James Theatre and its former run at New York City Center with Encores! The piece has had multiple extensions, with the run now ending Jan. 8, 2023 with the incredibly talented cast and crew, among which is Muhlenberg's very own Kennedy Kanagawa '08.

"It's so crazy and weird and bizarre and exciting. I don't think that my body is fully capable of processing all the emotions. They're very much bottlenecking because this was so fast," stated Kanagawa on his Broadway debut.

The production first started off as a two week run with Encores! at New York City Center from May 4 through May 15. It was a very fast process for Kanagawa and the rest of the ensemble.

Kanagawa stated, "My agent got the offer in the end of March, and then we started rehearsals a month later for 10 days.

We had 10 days to mount the show for a two week run and then, at the end of the first week, found out that we were transferring to Broadway. And then a month after that, we were on Broadway. The people in the show are so phenomenal and it's literally just like watching a masterclass every day with my literal idols."

On Sept. 4, Brian d'Arcy James, Philipa Soo, Julia Lester, Sara Bareilles and other talented cast members left the cast and were replaced by new cast members. Kanagawa shared his excitement for working with the new cast, "I mean, I'm excited to work with all of them, but Stephanie J. Block is a literal goddess."

During the initial run at New York City Center, the cast would talk about the likelihood of transferring to Broadway. The wish came true on the actor's day off. When Kanagawa found out it was going to be mounted at the St. James Theatre, he told his partner, "I think I'm gonna be on Broadway." Then he was like, "What?" and so he hugs me and we both started screaming and we're jumping up and down," says Kanagawa.

Transitioning to Broadway allowed for new audience members to be introduced to Kanagawa's loveable portrayal of Milky White, the cow, the compan-

ion of Jack from the fairytale "Jack and the Beanstalk." The cow is portrayed through a puppet designed by James Ortiz. Kanagawa worked closely with Ortiz to bring Milky White to life.

"When they were looking for an actor for this track, Lear deBessonet, our director, was kind of looking to James to recommend someone who would be able to puppeteer. But they wanted it to be someone who was also able to sing and so James recommended me," stated Kanagawa.

The rehearsal process allowed for Ortiz and Kanagawa to play with the puppet and discover Milky White as a character. Due to the short time frame, the main focus was putting the show together. Kanagawa shared, "James and I would love to go off into the corner, and be like... 'How does it work?'"

"At Muhlenberg you have all these different disciplines [that] are kind of layered on top of each other, and it's really encouraged... to do everything... I had never done puppetry before, but what I had done was a lot of physical theater like... sack [day]... It's not puppeteering, but it's kind of like you're using your body almost as its own puppet."

"I'm having the time of my life. I think the reception that Milky White is getting is so fun. People are sending me fan art. And you know, there was of course the tattoo." One devoted fan got a tattoo of the puppet to showcase their passion for the character and for the show.

"Into the Woods" on Broadway extended its run for the last time until Jan. 8, 2023, and a cast album will be released soon, sometime this month.

Kanagawa concluded, "We're just goofing around, having so much fun—and the audience! It's been really wonderful hearing their support, and it feels very validating that the audience has gone along with us on this journey with the cow. We have a lot of fun."



# Creating a space for musical voices on Muhlenberg's campus

BY JOHNNY VEGLIA AND DANNY MILKIS  
ARTS & CULTURE EDITORS

The Muhlenberg College campus is home to over 120 clubs but of the performance groups and ensembles, most focus on theatre and comedy. The Muhlenberg Theatre Association, Muhlenberg Comedy Association, A Capella Council and WMUH are great resources, but none of them allow for music production. Rachelle Montilus '24 decided to fill this void with a new club, A-Town Records (ATR).

A long-time singer and songwriter, Montilus dedicated herself to the creation of an environment at Muhlenberg where student musicians could feel a resolute sense of agency to wear many hats, and to see their original work showcased in many formats and mediums. Montilus serves as the Label Director for ATR.

"There's no real hub for singers and songwriters and musicians to just create," explains Montilus. "There's the MTA, there's the MCA... There was just really no organization on campus with [a] music orientation, which was strange to me."

"In early February, I was in 'Miss You Like Hell' with the department... at the beginning of the semester, I had just come off of my own songwriting high. And I was like, I really want to be able to do this at school," stated Montilus.

Another cast member of "Miss You Like Hell," Luke McIntyre '25, ATR's business manager, shared, "I met Rachelle and Lorenzo doing 'Miss You Like Hell' and we talked about how there were organizations for so many arts programs except for music. So, the three of us kind of reached out to people we thought would be interested in getting it up and running. I then put the three of us in contact with Dr. Kaiser in the music department who I took 'music and technology' with to be our advisor."

The club has only grown from there and is open to any students on campus who are interested in music.

"We want to give student musicians a place to put their work. So hopefully working on more recording this semester and getting things on streaming platforms, we did two of those last semester... But I guess our goal for this semester is to



ATR jamming out.

keep that going, expanding as much as we can. We've been taking on volunteers with events. We have two new board members, which has been helping a lot, but it's definitely all hands on deck to make things happen. And I think in that collaboration, we want that to reflect on our work that we do with the club so collaboration, music, all that good stuff," continued Montilus.

The club is also doing a refreshing production of the musical, "Spring Awakening." The production will take place in the Event Space and ATR hopes to make the show more accessible and relatable for students.

"[Spring Awakening] is a lot of hard material that I just thought it wouldn't be a good idea for us, as such a young organization, to put out a show of this volatility. But then after [an] interview with Alegra

[Secor '23], myself and Paige [Majewski '24], our production manager had a lot of really good thoughts," says Montilus. "We wanted to do the show because we trusted the director, and to this day, Alegra has been so awesome in making sure that actors have resources and diverse, safe spaces and that we have an intimacy coordinator at all times."

"Our goal right now is to continue expanding opportunities to get live music out there on campus," says Lorenzo Antigua '24, ATR's director of music. "We're looking at Muhlapalooza at the end of the semester to make that happen in a really freeform way." The club is also hoping to crowdsource funding for this festival.

ATR has their first general meeting/karaoke night tonight, Sept. 15, from 8 to 10 p.m. in the Red Door and people can learn about all the events happening with ATR

from their newsletter and following @atrberg on Instagram.

"This has definitely become one of the things I'm most proud to be apart of. There are so many talented musicians all across campus so giving them opportunities to create and perform is just awesome," stated McIntyre.

Montilus concluded, "I don't think we have any interest in making it an exclusive membership type thing. We are keeping it open because anybody can consider themselves a musician for any time. [We are] making a community that is open for anybody who feels like they want to join... in on the fun."

## Vocal ensembles return under new direction

BY DANNY MILKIS  
CO-ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

This fall, the Muhlenberg music department welcomes Visiting Assistant Professor John Verkuilen, to take on the role of choral director and professor of voice for applied lessons and larger ensembles, in light of the recent exit of long-time choral director Christopher Jackson, D.M.A., who now works as the full-time artistic director of the Bethlehem Bach Choir.

Verkuilen explained that this is his first faculty position which he is tackling alongside continued work on his doctoral degree. He has been directing the Chamber Choir and the College Choir, while staff pianist Vincent Trovato now directs

the Treble Choir.

Prior to accepting the position at Muhlenberg, he directed a few ensembles in Massachusetts. In addition to his role as assistant conductor at the Oratorio Society of New York, where he had the opportunity to perform at Carnegie Hall.

When asked about the overarching ideas surrounding the fall 2022 concert season, Verkuilen explained, "The theme that I'm bringing in this semester is community, and just gladness to be back together."

SEE **VOCAL** PAGE 7



# A capella greets the new semester!



A capella group Noteworthy has a blast on stage at Berg's Got Talent!

BY IAN CLARK  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

With a new year beginning here at Muhlenberg comes the return of the countless events put on by the campus community. The semester started off with performances from the College's six a capella groups: Acafellas, Chaimonics, CODA, Dynamics, InAcchord and Noteworthy, and two performance ensembles: Great American Songbook Project (GASP) and Rejoice Gospel Choir at A Capella Council's annual Berg's Got Talent concert on Sept. 1.

GASP member, Zach Kleiman '25 describes the event, "It's such a great way to introduce some of the a capella and non-a capella singing groups on campus to first-years while also just being a wonderful amalgamation of music!"

The first thing to stand out about the event, like most a capella concerts, is the energy. Every seat was filled that night,

with people even seating themselves on the ledges adorning the walls or even just standing in the back of the Event Space. The incredible audience helped feed into the energy of the performers by continuously cheering them through anything from incredible riffs or missed notes. Noteworthy member Danny Milkis '23 said, "It seemed like the energy from the crowd was really positive and responsive... and even though we went last, there was so much excitement about our art and our craft. The levels and energy keeps getting better and better every year, and it's made me so excited to meet all of the auditioners."

GASP and Acafellas member Sandy McInerney '23 made a point about how they missed performing with their groups, "I was incredibly happy to see how big the turnout was, and I also had so much fun performing with GASP and the Acafellas again."

As McInerney mentioned, the feeling of camaraderie between performers in their

groups is abundantly clear through their performances as well as their words. Noteworthy member Katie Harris '24 brought up a similar feeling. "Everyone is so talented and supportive of each other, and I'm reminded of that every time I get to perform in an event like this." Kleiman reflected on his solo during a song as well, saying, "I feel very grateful to have performed a solo... In a school full of very talented performers, it's always nice to contribute to that." Kleiman likewise emphasizes the supportive nature within and between these performance groups.

McInerney continued, mentioning the current slate of auditions and callbacks happening following Berg's Got Talent, "[After the event], I got the chance to talk to a few interested individuals, and it made me so excited for auditions... This current audition process is the third one I've been through, so I'm always completely blown away by the amount of talented people we have. Right now we're getting ready for callbacks, and it looks

like those are going to be exciting as well! I can't wait to get our newbies!"

Milkis, in his last year as a part of Noteworthy, is also eager to see newcomers, saying, "it has made me so excited to meet all of the auditioners. I'm really just humbled that so many younger people have taken an interest in a group that has meant so much to me in my four years at Muhlenberg." Kleiman also commented, "As a result of the event, a ton of people signed up for auditions at the activities fair. As a relatively small, new group, it means so much to us to see a lot of interest from people to join the group... we are so excited to welcome some new members to GASP."

Berg's Got Talent marks the beginning of what will inevitably be another incredible semester for a capella and performance groups on campus, especially as new members are on the horizon to join this supportive and talented community.

## FROM VOCAL PAGE 6

Verkuilen made it very clear that, even though the world is still very much coping with the horrors of the COVID-19 pandemic, the immense scientific progress of our medical system and personal responsibility of the Muhlenberg community has allowed for a greater reintroduction of ensemble-based musicianship in its most desired rehearsal format.

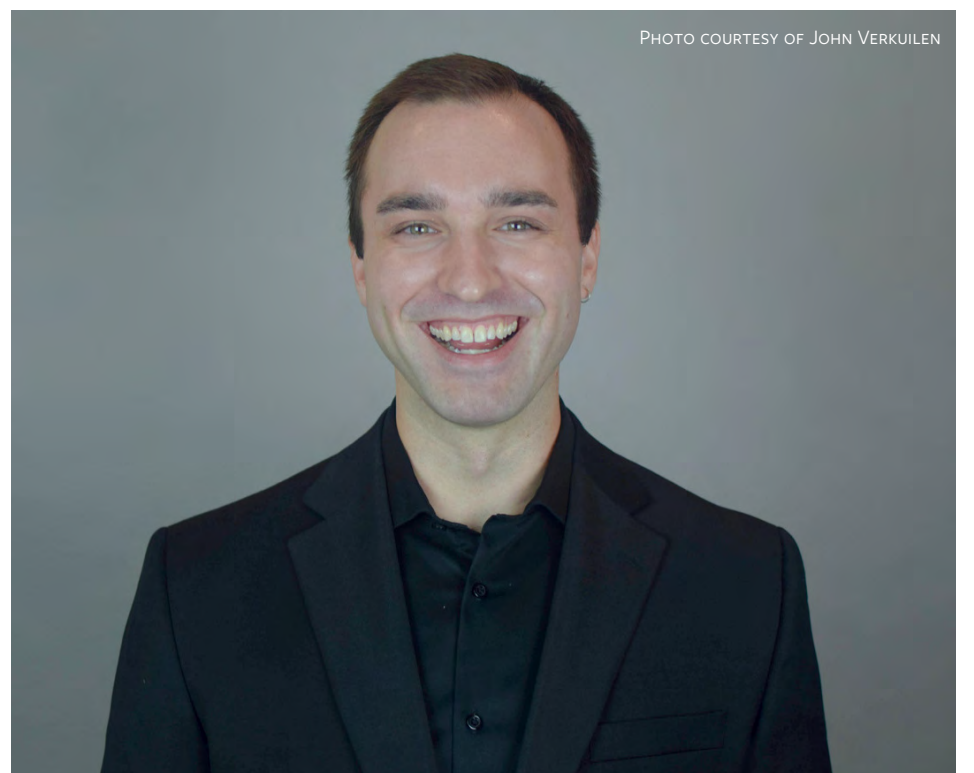
"It's nice to feel like we're back to a point where we can be in person, be making music together, while predominantly singing live," he continued. "The focal point of this semester is really going to be teamwork and the joy of singing with a group again."

"I think the thing my peers and I have appreciated the most about how he [Verkuilen] runs the chamber choir is his respect for our time," says Ava Pirie '23. "He makes it a point to start promptly at 5 p.m. and let us go right at 6:30 p.m. It's incredibly refreshing to have an authority figure respect students' time this much, particularly in the teaching of a class in which the material is so easy to get caught up in."

In terms of repertoire, Verkuilen explained to his classes that he is committed to assembling a program that allows students to interact with the music and text of many cultural backgrounds and musical styles. Additionally, he elaborated on a particular fondness for romantic to late twentieth century English chamber choir music, including compositions from Edward Elgar, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Benjamin Britten.

"Every face is a new face for me coming into this [position], so I really want to focus on building relationships," explains Verkuilen. "I've already had so many wonderful conversations with students and staff, and I've already had so many singular moments in rehearsal—whether during warm-ups or learning new music—that have stuck with me as a director."

"John has stepped into his role of chamber choir director very quickly but has made the transition seamless," says Anna Bobok '23. "I don't know what our concert or candlelight will look like, but I do feel like we're in good hands."



Get to know our Visiting Assistant Professor of Music John Verkuilen.



More from Arts & Culture...

# Top six beauty products you need for the fall



BY VALERIE KUSNER  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Fall is right around the corner, and with a new season comes new beauty trends. As classes start to ramp up, researching current beauty trends might not be the first thing on your mind, that’s why I did it for you.

Living in a tight space is difficult enough. Luckily, you don’t need many products to look your best on campus this year. Save money and time with these true staples.

Here are six affordable beauty products you need this fall.

1. e.l.f. Shine Eraser Blotting Sheets on Amazon (\$7) - Three pack

The conveniently packaged papers fit perfectly in your hand or school bag for easy access to pull them out if you feel your skin getting oily. On a night out, when you are stuck in a sweaty basement, these papers come to the rescue to remove excess oil and mattify your skin without taking any makeup off.

2. Batiste Dry Shampoo Original Trial Size on Amazon (\$4.69)

This dry shampoo is the perfect tool to help volumize hair and reduce the greasy roots look that no one desires. Apply this spray five inches away from your head and let the product sit for a few minutes before brushing it out. Do not be alarmed if the powder makes your hair white, just keep rubbing it in and eventually, you’ll achieve that flawless clean look.

3. Retractable Waterproof Eyeliner at Sephora (\$13.00) shade: Electric Blue

Blue is the new black. Wearing blue eyeliner is chic and creates the coolest finishing touch to any look. This bold pigment provides a beautiful contrast when paired with any eye color. As college students who are constantly on the go, we don’t always have time to reapply makeup throughout the day. Using waterproof eyeliner allows for a one-time application with no mess.

4. Physicians Formula Shimmer Strip Eyeshadow at Target (\$8.59)

I swear by this eyeshadow, as it has been an essential part of my makeup look for years. Instead of applying this eyeshadow to your lids, highlight the inner corner of your eye with the lightest shade to make your eyes pop and to achieve the illusion that you are not tired from all the classes you were in that day.

5. Kevin Aucoin The Contour Book - The Art of Sculpting + Defining Volume III (\$59)

Now, I know what you’re thinking, yes this is a little pricey but after this purchase, you won’t have to buy another contour kit or blush for years. This all-in-one blush, highlighter and bronzer book takes up little space in your makeup kit and is great for fitting in the tiny living space that we all have to adapt while living here at Muhlenberg. This palette is inclusive for most—but not all—skin tones.

6. Jones Road\* x Hervé Universal Hair Balm (\$34)

This all-purpose styling cream is for all types of hair. Whether you’re coming out of the shower or prepping for a night out, this styling cream will strengthen, repair and condition your hair for an effortless,

classy look. No need for any other hair products filling up your counter space, this hair balm does everything from de-frizzing to volumizing your hair. Not to mention, it smells amazing!

*\*Note: Kusner is currently employed by Jones Road.*

## OPINIONS&EDITORIALS

# Hey besties: The loss of meaning or perception?

BY JOHNNY VEGLIA  
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

Hey bestie!!!!!!!!!!!!

The term “bestie” can be heard anywhere, between friends and colleagues or random strangers who are too scared to get the name wrong of the person they are talking to. Now don’t get me wrong, I do this all the time myself and will still do so after this is published, but I think we are going to lose our sense of friendship and belonging.

Hey bestie!!!!!!!!!!!!

How will we know someone is fond of us and not just saying hello on the way to class? Overall, I’m confused. Are we peers or are we more? If a “bestie” chooses to use “I love you” or other loving language every five minutes, do those words lose their meaning? I love the recognition and kind words, but are we just saying it to fill the void?

Hey bestie!!!!!!

Now, don’t get me wrong, I am all for gender-inclusive language and I am so glad we are allowing everyone to feel included. The gender-neutral terms should definitely be celebrated, but should we really be calling everyone our best friend for life? I especially appreciate using “I love you” to male-identifying friends to combat toxic masculinity and to allow men to express their feelings and care.

Hey bestie!!!!!!

I am probably just being overdramatic, but it might also be the lack of assurance if someone likes me. I love making friends, but am I just being led-on to ask a question about a club activity or to put something in an email?

Hey bestie!!!!!!

At least the term is friendly and warm and it makes me smile... but do I even know you? Circling back to “I love you,” it’s a double-edged sword. The phrase

becoming mainstream allows for people to be more comfortable and open with their friends and people they care about. However, should we really be saying it to someone who held the door open for five minutes? Also, when you walk into a store or into a theme park, do you really want this person you just met to be calling you a friend?

Hey bestie!!!

I would just like to emphasize once again that I appreciate us being inclusive with our everyday language, but shouldn’t we say something when we mean it? Let’s celebrate our friends and those we love more often, but let’s just #bereal when we can. Well BeReal is another story altogether.

Hey bestie!!

So long pals and let’s start using names maybe? I know it’s hard sometimes, I completely get it. I often get anxious I will say the wrong name, but at least we truly recognize each other with our names.

Hey bestie!



PHOTO COURTESY OF PEXELS USER POLINA TANKILEVITCH



## Paige's Page

BY PAIGE WEISBURG  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Hey, besties! Welcome to the first edition of Paige's Page this semester! I really missed doing this over the summer! It's really fun for me to get to answer your questions! For those of you that are reading Paige's Page for the first time, welcome to Muhlenberg! I'm Paige and I love giving advice that I have no authority to give. I don't know about all of you but I am personally having a really interesting time readjusting to life here. And while it is my last semester and I should be capable of doing that at this point, I feel like I'm coming in with fresh eyes. A lot of you have sent me questions about returning back to campus and I am so excited to answer them, so let's get into it!

**Q** Hi, Paige! How do I make the most of my senior year and not overload myself with commitments?

Hey, bestie! I actually think that I am finally equipped to answer this question! I think that every person that attends this fine institution can confidently say that overloading yourself with commitments is what makes Muhlenberg students, Muhlenberg students. While that certainly is not a lie, it is also so unbelievably unhealthy. Make the most of your time here but also be aware of your mental health. Being constantly physically, mentally and emotionally exhausted can tend to do more harm than good. Just remember that all of this is temporary. Do things that make you feel fulfilled, and if that means being really busy for a couple of weeks then so be it. You can always catch up on your sleep, you can do self-care regularly and you can make sacrifices to make yourself feel better. Being a senior is hard; it feels like there's this need to do everything we haven't gotten to do before we leave. However, that can also be the most fun part. Do those things, create new memories and be stupid because you can. This year I am choosing chaos, and I'm doing everything for the plot. Be spontaneous and say yes to everything because you can. Have fun! (Also, I recognize this entire response is a contradiction, but so is existing at this College so that is OK.)

**Q** Hey, Paige. I want to graduate early and save money for grad school but it feels really scary. I know you are graduating early so can you give me some advice?

Hi, bestie! Congratulations on making this decision for yourself! Speaking personally, I understand this fear because I have been anxious about it since I de-

cided I wanted to graduate early freshman year. I am planning on going to law school next fall and higher education is insanely expensive as I'm sure all of us know. I have always been someone who gets lost thinking about the future, and I am just now learning how to live in the moment and take everything day by day. Thinking about graduation doesn't help with that very much. I love Muhlenberg. The routine is so helpful and living with my friends so close to me is like living in an adult playdate every single day. The leadership opportunities I have been given are unlike anything 18-year-old Paige could have ever imagined. But I am ready to take that step into the real world full of unknowns. Now, you have to decide if you are too. No matter what you decide to do, it literally will not matter in five, 10, 15 years from now so do what you need to do and don't think about the way your future self will feel. Your future self has so many incredible experiences ahead of them and Muhlenberg is just a step toward the person you will be.

**Q** Hi, Paige. Do you have any tips for being confident?

Hey, bestie! I love this question! From a really young age my parents have instilled in me that confidence is something that I need in order to function as a person in this world. I have always been called conceited and I used to see that as a character flaw. I eventually realized it's just something other people don't possess and that makes them feel insecure, and that is literally not my problem. Without this so-called cockiness, Paige's Page would not exist so you are all welcome. I think that being confident is a real mindset shift and

if you tell yourself that you are amazing and perfect at everything enough times it becomes true. Everyone has moments where they feel insecure and unsure of themselves but that's really normal and totally okay. However, learning where your strengths are and focusing on things, and more importantly relationships that make you feel confident should be what you prioritize. If you don't like yourself sometimes, that's so okay! Sit and reflect for a little bit with that feeling and then put on some Doja Cat or Megan Thee Stallion and believe that you are strong and beautiful, and you can do whatever you want. Stop caring what other people think of you because their opinions don't mean anything, and people that have bad things to say are more than likely jealous of you and your ability to live life on your terms. You slay, don't forget it.

Keep your eye out for Paige's Page Live, date and location coming soon!

You can submit questions to <https://tinyurl.com/paigespagequestion>. It will also be linked in my Instagram bio— @paigeweisburg and in The Muhlenberg Weekly Instagram Linktree.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PEXELS USER MWABONJE



BY MUSTAFA HALL  
OP/ED EDITOR

## How I redefined Black masculinity

chapters and different periods, this book collided and rammed into me. Yet, other times, it spoke with and to me on a sacred level. And as I turned each page, feeling the words come alive through my fingers, the paper cut me but also acted as a fast-acting balm to said wounds. I find that these are the best and most life-altering books. A good book should challenge you and bruise you a little, but also make you understand that you needed to be bruised.

Ultimately, "All Boys Aren't Blue" illuminated the hidden corners of my Black Queerness that I had such trouble seeing. Not just because I didn't want to see them, but also because I didn't know how to. To see these scary, colorful parts of me was to challenge Black hypermasculinity. To acknowledge the velvet and rosewater that softens my voice was to bring attention to how Black hypermasculinity is a terrifying force that has historically and presently been an oppressive agent against Queer Black men. "All Boys Aren't Blue" permitted me the power to exist outside the binary while still finding validity and truth in my Black manhood.

As I read the stories and the experiences of Johnson, I couldn't help but feel so seen and nurtured. It felt as though our

stories were one and identical but strikingly opposite at the same time. Finally, I was able to understand what I had been feeling for so long. I could look at myself, at all parts of myself, and see a beautifully feminine man who was perfectly himself. I have redefined within my core what Black manhood is. Since my youth, I was taught that Black manhood is meant to be dipped in cement and finished in titanium. It was meant to be sharp and roughly textured to the touch. I no longer hold space for such rigidity. For me, and within me, Black manhood is dipped in feathers and silk and finished with gold and glitter. It isn't static or flat energy but rather takes inspiration from what my eye finds, catches and holds.

I am simply Mustafa. A Black Queer man who lives in the realms and galaxies beyond the binary.

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor ([bergweeklyoped@gmail.com](mailto:bergweeklyoped@gmail.com)) or the Editor-in-Chief ([weeklyeditor@gmail.com](mailto:weeklyeditor@gmail.com)) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.

This summer, I read a book that changed not just my life but also how I view gender, gender expression and the complexities around Black hypermasculinity. This book was called, "All Boys Aren't Blue" by George M. Johnson. In this memoir, Johnson gives a deep and personal run down of his upbringing; he allows the reader to enter his world and absorb his narrative that surrounds gender, Blackness, relationships and Queerness and how they all jumble together to birth life. My relationship with this book was complex and contradictory at times. During different



# Field hockey pushes into the season

BY NOAH BERGER  
STAFF WRITER

On Friday, Sept. 9, the Muhlenberg field hockey team went up against the Moravian Greyhounds. Despite the Mules' best efforts, they were unable to get a victory at home and lost 3-0. However, that did not diminish their spirits, as they are still optimistic that they can turn around the season.

Throughout the earlier portion of the season, two of the three losses by the Mules have been in overtime, and the team is working hard to find a way to scratch out some wins in these competitive games. Erin DiSandro '26 knows that the Mules have what it takes to start converting these close games into wins, "The team needs to continue to work on our spacing on the field and our replacement of each other as one of our teammates gets out of position. I think in the first four games we have found ourselves very clumped on the field." DiSandro continues, "We also [need to] spread the defense and have more room to work the ball down the field."

DiSandro went on to talk about the mindset needed to succeed. "We are trying to focus on working together as one unit throughout the entire game through communicating, supporting, and filling in for each other on the field. Our team theme for focusing on this... [is] to try and use the right side of the field more often this season... So that sense of unity on



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUHLENBERG DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

Field hockey embraces in celebration.

the field is definitely a big focus for us for the rest of the season."

Mikayla DeMichele '25 mentions, "our coaches have really tried to emphasize a few key things we need to work on in order to come out with the win. One specific strategy is how we will be working on baseline runs and pushing wide and to the right."

Mallory Holson '23 shared the team's key to success, "Is to stick to our play regardless of the situations around us,

putting the uncontrollable [factors] out of mind and focusing on what we can control in a game, practice and free time. When we really tap into our confidence and trust in one another, we're really successful!"

One of Demichele's personal goals for the season is to, "Continue to play with confidence. It is important to believe in yourself just as much as you believe in your teammates. This sport is a lot about trust and the belief that you have the abil-

ity to succeed (and in our case, win). Although we may find ourselves struggling occasionally, it is important to keep our heads up and to offer positive feedback to each other. We like to emphasize the importance of accountability."

Something the Mules definitely have going for them is their team chemistry. Katie Raab '24 mentioned, "our team chemistry has been incredible since the first day of preseason. We all boost each other up and keep a positive attitude."

This dynamic is evident by the effort displayed by the Mules every game day. When the announcer introduces the 11 starters, each one of them waves and the rest of the team cheers as loud as they can. If a ball rolls off the field, everyone is hustling to pick it up as quickly as possible so they can start the next play. The Mules know their place on the field, and are always willing to help their teammates succeed.

The Mules are ready to compete both in and out of the Centennial Conference for the remainder of the season. The Mules travel to Montclair State University on Saturday, Sept. 17 where they will go up against the Redhawks.

## Jeorcy Peña '23 challenges life "Iowa Style"

BY WILLIAM LLOSA  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Jeorcy Peña's '23 story is one of strife, grit and defying impossible odds.

"I grew up on the rough side of town and I've always seen a lot of people that were hurt, I've seen hurt, been through hurt and I've seen all of that, and just kind of knowing that there is a loving God... the example of what it is to live this life by working hard, enduring, persevering and just fighting for what's right. Wrestling to my full potential is something that I use in life to show the work ethic and character He has built in me."

Peña, a member of the wrestling team at Muhlenberg College, is in his fourth year and on his way to completing a double major in media and communication and psychology. His journey with wrestling started in eighth grade when he saw his cousins hitting the mats. Peña committed many hours of his high school days to sharpening his craft, not only as a hobby but as an escape from dangerous living conditions.

As a media and communication major, Peña is passionate about finding solutions to the world's wicked problems. Social media, especially how fast algorithms threaten young people with addiction and division. "The media has really confused us and I just feel like, yes, it can be used for good. But I feel like we have used it for

more harm than good honestly."

Peña, who made the decision to be off of all social media for the past two years, has seen first-hand what social media is doing to the youth of America. "A lot of people are just empty, no matter what they post, they are empty at the end of the day. It's concerning because I have younger family members and just seeing how they are acting..." Peña says, at a loss for words to describe the youth's perplexing situation. "But I trust God for that. They'll come around; I know it!"

Each day Peña takes on a challenging lifestyle "Iowa Style" (a wrestling term that should be renamed after the Mules) with the belief he is put on this Earth to do good, and when he talks about God being with him, it is inspiring to people of all faiths and beliefs. Peña's choice to double major in service of his lord and our world while overcoming a troubled past, is a testament to the opportunities that Muhlenberg athletics can offer, after years of self-sacrifice and commitment. Peña applied only to one college, the one he was destined for: Muhlenberg. "This was the only school that I was applying to." It seems like a full-court shot and he made it.

"God made it more like a foul shot," as Peña describes it. "My coach here at Muhlenberg was actually my high school coach. My sophomore year, he ended up leaving and coming up here to start coaching here, and two years later, he ended up

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUHLENBERG DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS



Jeorcy Peña '23 practices his take downs.

recruiting me to come here."

Peña is clearly not ready to waste the miracles of his Lord or the support of his coach and lifelong mentor. "I wasn't

even planning to go to college. I'm here through God and through wrestling. I just feel blessed and it's awesome."



# *‘Berg football returns to the gridiron*

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUHLENBERG DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS



Mules football players Isaiah Lobelo '24 and Pelton Esannason Jr. '24 speak about what the team can continue to build on following their first win of the season versus Dickinson College.

BY DYLAN ROSENBLATT  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

On Saturday, Sept. 10, the Mules returned to Scotty Wood Stadium to immobilize the Dickinson College Red Devils.

During the 2021 season, the Mules' strong defensive unit led the team all the way to the Centennial Conference championship. Throughout the entirety of last season, the Mules' defense only gave up more than 30 points in one regular season game and were able to hold opponents to zero points in three different contests. However, in their first game of the year against University Mary Harlin-Baylor (UMHB), the defense did not play up to their standards as they gave up nine touchdowns in their 62-13 loss. In the team's home opener, the defense man-

Pelton Esannason Jr. '24 stands ready to take on a new role on the team.

aged to bounce back against the Red Devils with a 34-21 victory, collecting six sacks along the way.

A highlight of the defensive attack last Saturday was outside linebacker Isaiah Lobelo '24, who led the team in tackles for loss (TFL), with 2.5 TFLs for 10 yards. Lobelo and the rest of the defense knew that they couldn't let one bad performance affect their next game. "Last week didn't turn out the way we wanted it to and we were all out there just trying to do too much instead of just doing our jobs. The focus this week was just to do what we've been taught all through camp and to not overthink things. One thing that Coach Milne always says to us is that this game is the most important one because it's the next one. And that's how we really didn't let our last game's performance damage our confidence this week," said Lobelo.

With a new quarterback following the graduation of Michael Hnatkowsky '22—who had been in the Mules' pocket since 2017—the defense knows that they must be elite to stay atop the Centennial Conference. "After Saturday's win the goal now is to do better and improve game by game. One of our themes for the season is called 'championship climb.' This is the daily improvement that we must go through to get to where we want to be by the end of the season. When we all play

on the same page and do what we've practiced week in and week out, we can be a top defense in this conference and that's how our mentality is going into each and every game," Lobelo said.

With Joe Reppetti '25 under center, the Mules' offense has adjusted the system and been able to make significant improvements through their first two games, adjusting the system to their new QB (quarterback.) Despite struggling against UMHB, the offense was able to show improvements, scoring four touchdowns and kicking two field goals on the way to 34 points. In his first career conference start, sophomore starting quarterback Joe Reppetti '25 started strong, throwing for 241 yards and scoring three total touchdowns (two passing and one rushing). "I think Joe has been doing a great job so far. He's been gaining confidence these last two games and I think it's only going to keep growing from here. Joe is great at keeping plays alive for us and finding receivers when we're open. I think his mobility makes it very tough on the defenses because they have to worry about him running and then the DBs (defensive backs) have to cover receivers for a longer time which is very hard. I think [Reppetti] will keep progressing and we'll have a very successful season," said wide receiver Pelton Esannason Jr. '24.

Esannason Jr. also spoke on how he and the rest of the receiving group have been able to build a strong connection with Reppetti despite being just two games into the season, saying, "I think the key has been the countless hours in preseason and practice. From Aug. 10 (the first day the team started practicing together), we've been practicing everyday trying to create that chemistry that a WR (wide receiver) and a QB needs to be successful, and I feel like it's been going great. With all of those reps comes trust, and that is vital to being successful. You gain trust by seeing your teammate do it day in and day out, and the trust increases because we see each other make plays and then it translates to games."

The Mules go up against the Ursinus College Bears this upcoming Saturday, Sept. 10 looking for vengeance after Ursinus was the sole team to beat them during the regular season in 2021.



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## 200 career wins, a humble accolade for Topping

By OLIVIA OBERMAN  
ASST. SPORTS EDITOR

When defender Zack Mikuta '24 was asked to describe men's head soccer coach Sean Topping '98 in one word he replied, "Driven."

On Sept. 1, the men's soccer team recorded a 4-2 victory over Juniata College while Coach Topping simultaneously recorded his monumental 200th career win.

Topping's initial outlook on the accolade: "I really enjoy working with this group of young men, so it was fantastic to share this moment with them. Two hundred wins is a milestone for Muhlenberg soccer, not just Sean Topping. It's a testament to all the great players, teams and coaches I have been fortunate to work with over the past 20 years."

Captain Josh Bordwick '23 reveals how this milestone also gives testament to Topping's work as an individual. "Two hundred wins is an amazing feat but the thing that most amazes me is the fact that he didn't care as much about that, but about our single performance in that game. That is how you are at a program for 20 years and reach 200 wins. Not being satisfied with individual goals, but team goals, and having those matter more than anything." Bordwick continues, "As a player and person Topp[ing] has shown us that adversity is part of life and we have to work hard to get through it. Nothing in life is handed to us and we can either work hard to get it, or watch others take it from us. No matter how skilled we are, or where we come from, we are all part of a team now that works together to complete a similar goal: win our matches."

Mikuta builds on this perspective, "Coach Topping holds his players to a high standard, and believes that each one of us can always offer more. This drive to always be better pushes [players] towards their full potential, and has translated into a long history of winning Muhlenberg teams."

Co-captain of the 1997 Centennial Conference (CC) championship team and two time recipient of All-CC First Team honors, Topping also took a major part in the Muhlenberg winning history as a player. He even expresses his undergraduate experience as the catalyst for his coaching career. "My college coach, Jeff Tipping, was the person who inspired me and gave me the tools to become a college coach. Obviously coaching here where myself and two younger brothers played

is special to me as well. I was very fortunate to play for one of the best teachers of the game in Coach Tipping and on some very successful teams. Coach Tipping left Muhlenberg to become the Director of Coaching Education at the United Soccer Coaches (formerly the NSCAA). Coach Tipping wrote the curriculum for many of the soccer coach licensing courses at that time. He was always ahead of the curve in coaching education. I was very lucky to have played for and coached with coach Tipping before taking over here at Muhlenberg. His mentorship and friendship has been invaluable to me throughout my career."

In the span of 20 years, Topping has coached many different teams and players—including six All-Americans and 25 All-CC First Team selections. So what differentiated his most successful teams and seasons from the others? Topping explains, "Some of our most successful teams always had a team identity. Hard-working, defensive or whatever it might have been but by the time a game was over the opposing team knew who we were. We are always incredibly difficult to beat here in Allentown." He continues, "You need to get the team to buy into the team first mentality and trust. What's best for the team might not always be what's best for me personally. Example — the team needs me to come off the bench for a spark but I want to be starting.."

Included in some of his most memorable coaching moments were, "Winning in the CC championship games in 2003, 2005 and 2014." Another highlight was "beating a very good Stevens [Institute of Technology] team at their place to go to the NCAA Sweet 16 in 2010. The Stevens head coach was my teammate, roommate and best man at my wedding."

When asked what his biggest piece of advice would be to a coach just starting out their career, he said, "Find a mentor who will challenge you and that you can learn from. Never stop gaining knowledge about your field, whether that is on the soccer field or in some other job. You have to put in the work! As a young coach, you'll be asked to recruit. This is where you can grow your network of contacts through club coaches, college coaches and others."

Topping's 200th career win mark is reflective of his sincere commitment to the Muhlenberg men's soccer program and the many players who have come through it. Topping's desire to coach at his alma mater further emphasizes his passion for



Sean Topping '98 celebrates his 200th win as a Muhlenberg College head coach.

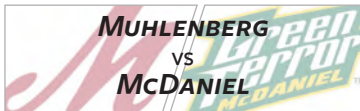
the sport and his dedication to representing Muhlenberg College proudly.

Success certainly does not formulate overnight—and neither does the methodology in order to achieve it. So, what does it actually take to win? Coach Topping

gives his credible perspective, "Great players and a team culture of trust... Players win games! Getting everyone on the team, staff included, to trust each other and the process."

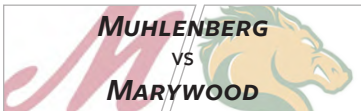
Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Sept. 15 - Sept. 22

### Women's Soccer



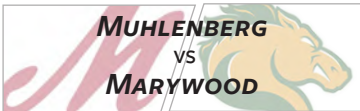
Sat, Sept. 17 @ 11:00 a.m.  
Varsity Field

### Men's Tennis



Sat, Sept. 17 @ 11:00 a.m.  
Kern Field Courts

### Women's Tennis



Sat, Sept. 17 @ 11:00 a.m.  
Kern Field Courts

### Men's Soccer



Tue, Sept. 20 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Varsity Field



A night of pies, hot sauce shots, and so much more....

read more on 5.



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2022

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## NEWS

Black Muhlenberg alumna broke boundaries for students of color.

read more on page 3



## ARTS & CULTURE

Living Writers program comes back alive.

read more on page 7



## OP/ED

Maria Rivera '23 shares an ode to her immigrant family.

read more on page 9



## SPORTS

'Berg soccer teams win the game through teamwork.

read more on page 11



# 'Say Yes to a Free Press' brings 'Berg community together



Representatives from different local Lehigh Valley news organizations and our very own Muhlenberg Weekly spoke at a panel highlighting the importance of supporting local news.

BY SABRINA VITALE  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

"We are sitting on a college campus tonight and we have teachers who are teaching this next generation of journalists," stated Stephanie Sigafos, digital content producer at LehighValleyNews.com, on a panel of five other professional journalists in the Seegers Union Event Space facing an audience of community members and college students alike. "If you're one of these kids going to Muhlenberg or Lehigh or Lafayette or any other college, and you know this is what you want to do... Don't let what's happening in this industry mislead you... When you're in it, you're in it for a reason."

On Thursday, Sept. 15, Media and Communication Lecturer Sara Vigneri hosted an event sponsored by The Muhlenberg Weekly and the media and communication department called "Say Yes to a Free Press."

After a screening of a documentary entitled "News Matters," that tackles the reality of a career in today's journalistic climate, a panel of journalists sat down to address questions, concerns and comments from students and community members. On the panel, there were five career journalists, Bob Orenstein, Christopher Baxter, Sigafos, Donna Natosi and Nick Falsone, as well as our own editor-in-chief at The Muhlenberg Weekly, Cydney Wilson '23.

The documentary itself was

centered around the aftermath of the purchase of The Denver Post by a hedge fund—the same hedge fund that bought Allentown's newspaper, The Morning Call. The film focused on the lives of the journalists and the struggles they faced through a political, social and increasingly digital climate where news is seen as a business instead of a public service. This climate has impacted the livelihoods of journalists all around the country.

Audience members were encouraged to submit questions virtually to be asked by Vigneri.

"We, as an industry, have to be smarter. We have fewer resources; the days of competition are gone. It makes no sense to send three people to the same press conference when we could send one and have those two others doing more quality, in-depth work," Executive Director and Founding Editor-in-Chief Christopher Baxter at Spotlight PA, explained upon being asked about the future of local news in Allentown. "It is now incumbent on us to prove our value to the community and to the public. And in doing that—that really has to guide what journalism is producing and who it's really for. And if we do that, then we need to do events like this and let people know that what we are doing is really a true public service and it requires public support."

"Journalism is a fundamental aspect of our democracy," Baxter added. "We need to support journalism in the same way that

we support the arts; the same way that we support cultural institutions, music... Can we get to what we had 20-25 years ago? Probably not. But we need to get somewhere. We need to be trying. It's too urgent. It's too important."

Journalism functioning as a backbone to democracy becomes difficult to recognize in a world where the human attention span seems to be shortening. Vigneri, in her next question, quoted the documentary that said, "the average time spent on [online] pages is two minutes and often less." It becomes easy for one to accept, with these statistics, that journalism is a fast-declining industry.

"If you produce compelling investigative journalism, compelling accountability journalism, deep, meaningful, reliable trusted voter guides...that number looks more like 17 minutes, 18 minutes," responded Baxter. "So, if our number is two minutes, it's not a problem with what the hell is up with the readership... The problem is we are clearly not providing something that's worth spending more than two minutes on."

The Director of Digital at LehighValleyNews.com, Donna Natozi, added that engagement comes from person-to-person connection. "If we are not in the community and learning what's important to the community, there's no way. If you're not seeing the reporter's face out there and connecting on a level where

they're relatable or reachable, that is the minimum we can do."

"Face time establishes trust," Sigafos added. "I'm not going to get the same answers from a political leader, or a police officer, or anyone else I'm interviewing, if I'm doing it over the phone, or I'm doing it via text or I'm doing it via Zoom. You don't establish yourself in the community by talking on your cell phone, you don't gain people's trust by texting. We need to be there."

Vigneri also used the event to introduce the Allentown Voice, a student journalism lab covering the affordable housing crisis in Allentown. "Teaching journalism isn't necessarily about training future journalists," said Vigneri. "The Allentown Voice allows me to teach journalism as a way to increase civic engagement and help students connect to our community." The Assistant Editor of the Allentown Voice, Alex Caban-Echevarria '23, commented, "Planning the event with Professor Vigneri over the summer was so special. Since it was our launch event, it culminated all the work our inaugural team of journalists did. It was important for us to share why local news matters and all that is happening right here in Allentown."

Wilson added that, "It is so crucial that we begin instilling the value of journalism in students at a young age—especially in college—so that students



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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The Muhlenberg Weekly strives for accuracy in reporting and writing, but we acknowledge that mistakes happen. Readers are invited to submit corrections about errors in articles, and they should be submitted to weeklyeditor@gmail.com. Corrections are also brought to our staff's attention by our own editors and writers. Our staff will review the suggested correction, consult with the author of the article, and issue the appropriate correction. Online corrections are located at the bottom of the article. Print corrections are located within the paper, on the page indicated in the online edition. However, The Weekly does not grant take-down requests for articles.

## ADVERTISING POLICY

We request that advertising material be submitted by the Monday preceding publication at 5 p.m. If materials have not been received at that time, the advertisement will not run and the advertiser is still responsible for 100% payment. We reserve the right to decline any advertisement that is misleading, inaccurate, fraudulent, or deemed generally unacceptable. This determination will be made by the Business Staff in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief. The Muhlenberg Weekly maintains a distinction between its news & editorial content and advertising. As such, advertisements will not be accepted if they imitate the general style of The Weekly, intentionally or unintentionally. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: headlines, bylines, fonts, and column-arrangements. In order to make this distinction, The Weekly also reserves the right to include the word "advertisement" on any advertisement that is deemed too native.

# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

09/05/2022 Martin Luther Hall: Report of individual sleeping outside, individual identified and left the area.	ment responded and will be issuing Disruptive Conduct Reports, and a Disruptive Conduct Report will be issued by the College. Prosser Hall: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, Allentown EMS responded and transported student to hospital.
09/07/2022 Taylor Hall: Report of violation of College policy, possession of prohibited item, item brought to Campus Safety and placed in locker.	09/14/2022 Prosser Hall: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student refused further treatment or transport.
09/08/2022 Walz Hall: Report to locate student, contact made, no further incident.	09/15/2022 Tilghman Street: Report of vandalism to vehicle to paint, door and handle, no suspects at this time.
09/09/2022 East Hall: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, Allentown EMS responded and transported student to hospital. Moyer Hall: Report of found laptop, unknown to whom item belongs, item placed in lost in found locker. Sorority House: Report of trespass, investigation to continue.	09/17/2022 The Village: Report of intoxicated student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student transported to hospital by Campus Safety Officer. Walz Hall: Report of alcohol violation, individuals identified and spoken to, alcohol disposed of by Campus Safety Officer.
09/10/2022 Prosser Hall: Report to transport student to hospital, student returned to campus by Campus Safety Officer.	
9/11/2022 Gordon Street: Report of alcohol violation, Allentown EMS responded and transported student to hospital. Leh Street: Report of noise complaint, Allentown Police Department	

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# 'Berg revives first-year transition group

BY SHAIYAN FEISEL  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The first-year adjustment group was arranged by Muhlenberg counselors Ian Wagner and Molly Harper '11 earlier this year. Harper stated that, "The objective of this group is to provide a safe and judgment free space for first-year students where people can get to know each other when transitioning to Muhlenberg." Wagner expressed that Counseling Services, "Had programs like this in the past, but we are doing this one differently. The old group was more structured, but Molly and I wanted this to have no set agenda—like a walk-in policy. We didn't want this to be something where it was too formal. This is a casual environment where any first-year student is welcome." These meetings are non-confidential and occur every Wednesday from 2-3:30 p.m., but students can walk in at any time. Meetings are held at the Counseling Services office on the second floor of the Life Sports Center.

Wagner started working as a counselor at Muhlenberg College last October. He understands what it's like to be new to campus. He shared that he is, "A big advocate [for] letting people know that they aren't alone. Especially as [sic] a gay man, having space is something important. I wanted a space where people can go to the counseling office without any stigma surrounding it."

Harper is a Muhlenberg alumna and,

"Remember[s] how difficult it was to come here and make new friends. I could imagine my younger self feeling like it would be easier transitioning to college if I had something like this."

Topics talked about during the meetings will range from living with other people for the first time, academic stress and the LGBTQIA+ community, to video games and favorite foods. Harper and Wagner start each meeting by introducing themselves, but after that there isn't any set structure and students are free to talk about whatever they wish.

After talking to some first-year students on campus, many were unaware that they had access to a resource like this. Marley McGehee '26, says they, "Had no idea that there was a first-year transition group." An anonymous first-year student recommends going to the group if you can, as, "Muhlenberg feels like a very homey place, but it also feels like you are being shot through a cannon."

Other Muhlenberg students echoed the usefulness of this group. Nicole Alberto Agramonte '26 says, "Counseling Services is a really helpful resource at Muhlenberg College. I think it's important for students to connect while transitioning to a new environment. I think [not having] this resource would make the transition a lot harder for first-year students to adjust to college."

Any full-time undergraduate student at Muhlenberg College can access Counsel-



PHOTO BY SHAIYAN FEISEL '26

Ian Wagner and Molly Harper are warm and welcoming faces who are here to help new students adjust to Muhlenberg.

ing Services. To schedule a 1-on-1 session, students can simply go on their OneLog-in portal, then click the "PyraMed" icon. They then need to click "forms" and a link for a "consultation form" should pop up. Students can also walk into the counseling office from Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. and ask about scheduling an appointment. Students can also call at (484)-664-3178 and for emergencies outside of these hours, there is a 24/7 hotline (same number listed above) for students to connect with a mental health counselor. There is also an Instagram account (@muhlenbergwellness) that has information from Counseling Services, including

information about the counselors and their specialties.

The first-year transition group is currently the only group that is offered directly from Counseling Services, but Wagner said that future groups will run pending student interest. Harper emphasized that any full-time undergraduate Muhlenberg student can email a counselor and utilize all of the free and helpful resources that are available at Counseling Services.

## *an alumna profile on* Diane Williams



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CIARLA, 1972

BY GIOVANNI MERRIFIELD  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Diane Williams '72 was a student, an activist, a changemaker, a voice of the Black community and a life-long educator. Williams attended Muhlenberg College from the years of 1968-1972, and passed away in 2014. She was very passionate about the rights of the Black community as it was unjust that Black people were treated as less than or even seen as subhuman. She

was such a strong advocate for civil rights that she started the A.B.C. (Association of Black Collegians) where Black students could chat, hangout and discuss the racial makeup of the College.

Williams grew up in Harlem in a brownstone on 122nd Street between Seventh and Lenox avenues with her mother raising her, alongside her aunts and other family members. Growing up, she was strongly influenced by powerful women in her life, which she attributes her own power to. Williams' mother, Mae, highly emphasized the importance of education. At age three, Williams learned how

ner while I watched African American youth hosed by firefighters, beaten by cops, and bitten by dogs simply because they wanted the right to vote and have a decent education."

Williams entered Muhlenberg College from her Catholic school in 1968, and quickly became aware of how predominantly white Muhlenberg was. She was one of six Black students in her year and felt extremely out of place. With that being said, she quickly took to planning and organizing the A.B.C. (Association of Black Collegians), similar to the current Black Students Association (BSA)

own.

Williams wanted what was best for the Black students on campus because she knew how important an opportunity at Muhlenberg was for them and herself. She wanted the students to get the best education they could as she firmly believed that education was the best way for Black people to move up the socioeconomic ladder. Williams felt that no one could take your degree away from you because you fought for it, and it exists in the student's name forever. She praised education to the point where she tutored some of her Black peers so that they could do well in their classes and could continue to succeed.

Many white students and professors would call the Black students racial slurs behind their backs and sometimes would refer to them as such in-person. Some white students would be so hateful to the Black students to the point where Williams had had enough and started writing poetry in 1970 for The Muhlenberg Weekly and speaking out against what was going on. As mentioned earlier, Williams was heavily influenced by the civil rights movement when she was a child, which inspired her to fight against the oppressors on campus.

**"So many of my memories are studded with the fight for equality and justice."**

to read. Then, Williams later attended an all-Black Catholic school in Harlem, the only one of its kind in all of New York City, which prepared her well for college. With her mother's deep push for education, she learned as much as she could.

Williams was heavily influenced by the civil rights era when she was a child. She wrote in her 2013 blog, "I grew up during the Civil Rights Era. So many of my memories are studded with the fight for equality and justice. As a child I ate din-

on campus. During her time as a student, Williams fought for a Black living space/ house, a house of their own for Black students to just rest, relax and be their authentic selves. Muhlenberg did not agree with that idea, and instead decided to give the A.B.C. a room at the bottom of Martin Luther (ML) Hall. Williams was furious because Muhlenberg had been the location of many negative experiences for her and fellow Black students, yet the College couldn't give them a living space of their



# Midterm Madness

BY KATHERINE CONLON  
CO-NEWS EDITOR

The Muhlenberg Weekly is committed to informing the student body about the upcoming midterm election. In our new column, we will outline key races that 'Berg students can vote in. We have reached out to every candidate for their responses on a couple of critical questions. Below are the responses from the candidates for Pennsylvania's 132nd State House district:

**Can you briefly illustrate a couple (2-4) of your key policies or issues that you are planning to focus on if reelected?**

## Mike Schollossberg



PHOTO COURTESY OF CONSERVATIONPA.ORG

behind mental illness, increase access to treatment and reduce suicides.”

**How do you think your potential reelection could benefit college students, specifically those at Muhlenberg?**

“First and foremost, students want their voices heard. Muhlenberg brought me to Allentown (I’m from New Jersey—my dirty political secret). The school—and the students who attend it—will always have a special place in my heart.

But, I think students want someone who shares their values. I’ve fought for education and mental health, yes. But I’m very proudly progressive. I’m 100 percent pro-choice and endorsed by Planned Parenthood. I’m pro-gun control, pro-LGBTQ rights and pro-democracy. I believe in science. COVID is real. So is climate change. I think Muhlenberg students want someone whose views are based in reality. I think that’s me.”

“The two biggest ones I focus on are education and mental health. Both areas desperately need more resources. The education piece really matters to Allentown, which has one of the most underfunded districts in the state. As someone who graduated 17 years ago and is still paying off college loans, I completely understand the need to increase funding for higher education as well.

I’ve been very open about my own struggles with depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation, and used my own experiences to destigmatize mental illness. One of my most important goals is to put more money

## Bethney Finch



PHOTO COURTESY OF BETHFINCH4PA-HOUSE.COM

sional and also a wife and mother of three. I’ve been defending our children at Parkland school board meetings on topics like: CRT, illegal mandates and medical freedom. I am the founder of Freedom for Choice PA, a grass roots group of about 3000 members. We rallied for our healthcare workers, educators and others to take on the Department of Health & the Secretary of Health. I am passionate about defending our Constitutional God given inalienable freedoms! I will never be a typical self-serving politician. I will be your advocate.”

Candidate Finch did not respond to the Weekly’s request for comment. So, the following information is derived from her website.

“I’m a hard-working profes-

# Dr. Sen Zhang explains sustainable energy options

BY MATTHEW BARESH  
CO-NEWS EDITOR

Sen Zhang, Ph.D., visited Muhlenberg on Sept. 16 to host a seminar on his research in the fields of chemistry and sustainability. Zhang is an associate professor of chemistry at the University of Virginia and has various publications in studies of carbon dioxide and nanoparticles. He has received several awards including the 2021 Research Excellence Award from the University and the 2022 NSF CAREER Award from the US National Science Foundation. In his presentation, Zhang focused on catalysis as the key to clean energy. This is the addition of a chemical to increase the rate of a reaction, and the use of hydrogen in this process.

“Our current energy supply system in the U.S. is still based on the fossil fuel system,” Zhang explained. “It’s not a concern about energy supply, because we have an abundance of energy, but the real problem is the environmental concern. Currently, we have a lot of renewable energy sources like solar, hydro and wind, but it’s hard to store them effectively.”

His goal was to convert carbon dioxide and hydrogen into a chemical form of energy, however, this process can be costly. Zhang was granted \$3.7 million

from the U.S. Department of Energy to conduct his research on this pressing environmental issue. Zhang showed a specific interest in the use of hydrogen in the push for clean energy across the world.

Zhang said, “Hydrogen can directly be used as an energy source as there is no emission of carbon dioxide. Hydrogen will be used to create ammonia, a fertilizer that can be used as energy. The problem is that the largest source of hydrogen is fossil fuels.”

Zhang and his team of student researchers developed a tactic that turns carbon dioxide-producing waste into renewable natural gas energy. He achieved this result by removing impurities and moisture from the waste and using a catalyst to finalize the process.

When asked about his experience working with other collaborators, an essential aspect of the field, Zhang remarked, “[It was a] pretty natural process with little difficulty, but be careful with who you select with your collaborators. I was lucky to be very close to many colleges and universities to conduct research. Not a single group can handle a big challenge without the use of other departments. Every issue has multiple departments working to solve the same problem.”

Zhang shared some advice about aspiring chemists in the

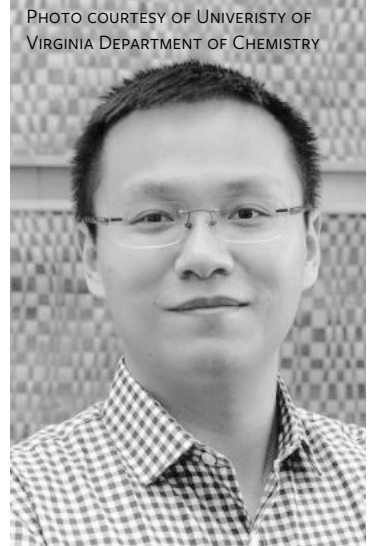


PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

Dr. Sen Zhang advocates for alternate fuel sources.

sustainability field toward the end of his presentation. He also explained how he climbed the ladder in the industry and is now a partner with Toyota to create fuel cells for their new electric vehicles.

“No matter what background you are from, as long as you have a strong interest in sustainable chemistry, there is a place for you in this field through taking labs and talking to other students and professors. It is never too late to do training for graduates.”

Ashley Kim ‘25, a student attendee of the seminar shared, “I enjoyed his seminar as it related to environmental sustainability and climate change. It was also interesting that he talked about many post-grad options that students had as well as the pros and cons of each opportunity.”

“Dr. Zhang’s lecture gave me new hope toward the future of clean energy,” said Andrew Doubleday ‘25.

Tori Brady ‘25 reflected on the seminar, explaining, “Something I really enjoy about the chemistry seminars, in general, is how it really expands your knowledge about the variety of research opportunities and different career paths available. The speakers are so passionate about what they are doing and are proud to share it with prospective chemistry students in hopes to encourage their chem[istry] careers.”

### FROM PRESS PAGE 1

continue to understand its importance and engage with the art of journalism, whether it be as a writer, editor, photographer or a reader.”

This rhetoric of creating good content and community engagement in order to increase interest seems ideal. However, as the documentary expressed, money, or the lack thereof, can become a huge issue when trying to run any newspaper.

“The money is not necessarily the problem...” Baxter said. “The collapse of the corporate model is also an opportunity for us to reinvent what news is and how it serves the public. And so when

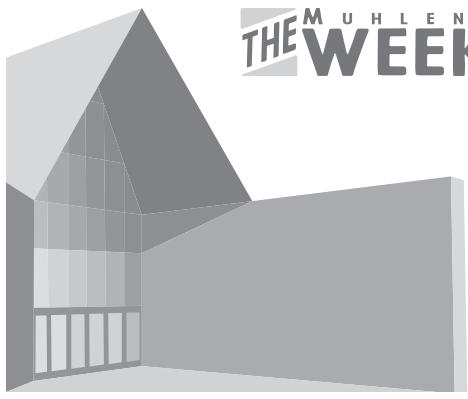
we talk about saving local news, I think we have to really think about what are the good parts that we want to save? And what are the bad parts that we want to leave behind?”

“At the end of the day” he adds, “if journalism is to be a core public service, a core aspect of our democracy... then it is much better in the hands of the people than it is in the hands or at the whims of an ad strategy. It’s time to bring journalism home and make it what we need it to be to be a stronger country.” Upon this comment, the audience began to applaud.

Hosting a panel of journalists to speak on their industry while creating an engagement event where local Lehigh Valley community members and Muhlenberg students alike were able to sit down and learn about engagement and the way local communities have worked together to continue to produce effective journalism was nothing less than inspiring.

“Get involved and stay involved,” Sigafos concluded. “We need the passion in this room and the reason you guys showed up tonight.”





"I can't waste time wondering if I've made mistakes.  
Life's too short for that. Something must change."

- *In The Mood For Love* (2000)

## 'Berg Film Association talk big-picture plans

BY IAN CLARK  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to stretch on, we are still learning to adapt to the changes it has brought to the campus community. A major loss over this time, especially following students being sent home, was a loss of connectedness, activities and overall morale. This major damper hit especially hard with clubs. Muhlenberg is home to over 120 clubs and organizations, but the unfortunate truth is not many were suited to survive such a stark change without in-person meetings. One such club that faced this fate was the Muhlenberg Film Association (MFA).

Pre-COVID, the MFA had film screenings and regularly collaborated with each other on film projects, among other activities, that more or less required having that in-person connection to have a true screening experience or to properly work together on projects. COVID forced a break on all of that and without these key building blocks of the club, it eventually faded as did many clubs in the wake of the pandemic.

However, this all changed in May 2022 when, led by co-presidents Amira Jackson '24 and Ryan Dratler '24, the MFA was resurrected, starting with a viewing party of the Oscars in the Red Door. With this event, the club hit the ground running and got back on its feet for the next semester in a short amount of time. The "new" MFA held their first interest meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 6, with a substantial



PHOTO BY RACHEL ALEXANDER '25

Desiree Oliver '25 smiles at the Blackmagic workshop.

group of interested students showing up, resurrecting this club and bringing together those interested in film or looking to get involved in film at Muhlenberg.

Jackson talks about the process of resurrecting the club, "In a way, we've had to restart and rebuild a student organization without access or knowledge to what this was prior. We are working to create a club that follows the footsteps of the original foundation while also making the modifications and improvements needed. Although it's been hard, it's been worth the work! It feels nice to know students are excited about our organization and

encourages us to keep pushing through these challenges." Jackson continues, sharing her vision for MFA, saying, "We want to motivate students to interact with the community more. We want students to make connections with filmmakers and other organizations outside of Muhlenberg."

The new leadership already has a great lineup of events and activities for this new era of the club. Dratler explains the club's plans including "bi-weekly movie discussions, screenings, workshops and trivia nights throughout the semester."

Workshop coordinator for the MFA,

Jamen Meistrich '24 adds that the club seeks, "to create a community of those who love film. Whether they want to make films, watch films, talk about films or whatever, we want to create a space for everyone to have the opportunity to do so. We want to make it as approachable as we can, as sometimes that can be the hardest step."

MFA has been making great strides with their events so far in such a small amount of time. They hold workshops with the goal of showcasing and educating people "on some of the equipment we have here at Walson and general workshops on different aspects of filmmaking," says Meistrich. MFA's first workshop was earlier in the month on Sat. Sept. 10 showcasing how to use the Blackmagic Pocket Cinema Cameras offered in the equipment room in Walson Hall, the home to the media & communication and film studies departments as well as the WMUH radio station. The Blackmagic workshop gave students an opportunity to learn how to use a very intricate and powerful camera, giving them a step forward to start creating films on their own.

Along with these workshops, the club also has been screening movies to have discussions about filmmaking techniques and showcasing them through demonstrations for events called "Movie Tuesdays," the first film they started with was Alfonso Cuarón's "Children of Men." Along with screenings for these events, MFA also works with a local arthouse the-

[SEE PICTURE PAGE 7](#)

## MCA's Comedy Slam fundraises and entertains

BY JULIA LENNON  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Bright lights sparkled down on the stage in the Red Door the night of Saturday, Sept. 17, for the Comedy Slam Fundraiser, hosted by the Muhlenberg Comedy Association (MCA). The shimmering disco ball reflected the excitement of the crowd. The audience was excited as people yelled words of encouragement. One audience member, Colin McCormack '26, was asked, "Are you excited?" and he replied with enthusiasm, "Absolutely!" The crowd wasn't quite sure what to expect. Everything but the stage was shrouded in shadow.

Songs from "Mamma Mia!" played, setting the energized tone for the night, while people sang along as they settled into their seats. Members of the MCA

announced the coveted secret of the night: the goal of Sept. 17's Comedy Slam. Christine Zak '23, co-president of the association, announced, "Tonight is a fundraiser for our future comedy event in November!" The audience cheered loudly. Coming Nov. 18 and 19, professional comedians as well as the MCA will perform and offer exclusive workshops to the student body. The events of the night included a plethora of auctions creatively planned by the MCA: \$5 to pie a member of the group in the face, hot sauce shots to be consumed by the group once certain benchmarks were hit, a s'mores raffle, a meet-n-greet with the association's own Nick Pierron '24, a cameo made by Molly Levine '24 and Andrew Gordon '23 and \$5 to draw a sharpie tattoo on Zak.

Luke McIntyre '25 of the Muhlenberg Improv Association (MIA) told The

Muhlenberg Weekly, "I'm happy to raise money for a really cool event." Going off of that statement, Pierron commented enthusiastically, "It's a load of fun. You get to see people get pied in the face." Being part of the group of people getting pied, Pierron noted, "it's worth it," for the cause.

Zak stated, "To plan we sort of just asked each group to come up with ideas of things they could auction off. Then Taylor [Reed '23, MCA co-president] and I came up with some extra bits and pieces here and there and got supplies. The event was sort of a go with the flow kind of thing though. Waiting for someone to pay to pie a member of UiP [Underground improv Project], letting people roam around, doing live auctions when there was a lull in the action."

Jaxson Goldsmith '23 was the first

member of UiP to get pied. He stepped onto a big purple liner and an audience member smashed the pie into his face. When asked how it felt to get pied, Goldsmith said, "It was a really vicious slam in the face. I really didn't expect the whipped cream to go everywhere. I'd do it again!" Ryan Steremberg '25, an audience member, perpetrated the pie-ing. When asked how it felt to pie someone, Steremberg said, "It felt nice. A rare opportunity you can't get elsewhere." Throughout the night, several members of the association downed hot sauce as the fundraiser total climbed higher and higher. The crowd roared, "DRINK. THE. HOT SAUCE!" in wild encouragement.

A new auction item was soon offered  
[SEE MCA PAGE 6](#)



# Knitting a new semester of possibilities for KnitWits

BY SAMANTHA TEMPKIN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

"We train anyone who wants to learn how to knit or crochet. You don't have to be an expert, you can come in like I did without any knowledge whatsoever and still learn." Lauren Silverstein '23 was a first-year when her friend Maxine Stone '23 took her to a KnitWits meeting for the first time. Silverstein was unsure about whether she would be good at knitting or whether the club would be a good fit for her. Now, Silverstein and Maxine are the president and the vice president of the KnitWits and are looking to expand their club in all aspects for the new semester.

After that first meeting, Silverstein ended up really enjoying being a part of the KnitWits and attended every meeting. Silverstein became the treasurer during her first year and sophomore year, eventually taking on the role of president from junior year until now. The KnitWits have always been a small club and Silverstein indicates that they tend to lose members towards the end of the semester. For this reason, one of Silverstein's biggest goals for the upcoming school year is to broaden the club's audience and to cater to everyone, whether they have experience in knitting or not.

Silverstein hopes to continue conducting workshops for people who want to learn how to knit or crochet but do not know where to start. Last fall, the KnitWits partnered with Make One, a compa-



The KnitWits gather for a group photo at one of their meetings.

ny that hosts workshops teaching people how to knit. They learned how to knit items like blankets, hats, gloves, elephant stuffed animals and more in the span of 10 workshops. Silverstein aims to continue conducting workshops for anyone to participate in, this time having club members sign up to lead them. This ensures that everyone has the opportunity to display their individual talents and to feel really involved and appreciated within the club. The KnitWits will also continue having weekly meetings. This is a more informal setting where people can learn how to knit or simply talk about their week while knitting. It is a relaxed environment and

a great place for students to ask questions since everyone has different levels of experience. Silverstein says, "It's a social club so while we might be knitting during the meetings, we're also getting to know each other."

Other members of the club's executive board this semester include Dylan Shepard '25 as social media manager and secretary, Kayla Hartman '24 as treasurer, Maxine Stone '23 as vice president and Emily York '23, who helps run meetings. It is clear that Silverstein feels confident in the board's abilities to carry out the goals of the club along with her. Hartman said, "My favorite part about the club is that

the goal is to create a fun and encouraging environment for all members. I didn't know how to knit at all when I joined, and now it's an important hobby of mine." She indicates that she has been friends with Stone and York since they all joined the club, and their experience since first year makes her confident that the two know how to help run the club in a way that embraces trying new things. Silverstein knows she can rely on the club's executive board to work as a team to keep the KnitWits going strong this semester.

Silverstein says, "You can also have some skill and want to just improve that skill, or if you want to have a space to socialize and just knit or crochet. You can have someone keeping track of how well you're doing. It's really helpful to have a weekly meeting to get you enthusiastic about actually knitting in your free time or crocheting in your free time." Weekly meetings for the KnitWits take place on Sundays from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. They are also planning member-taught workshops throughout October and November. The KnitWits are also hosting a sale in Seegers on Sept. 28 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. in Seegers, where they will sell knitted goods in order to fundraise for the club.

Hartman concluded, "It's also mainly a social club, so it's been a great place to meet people and make really good friends. It's just a supportive, friendly club, and it's perfect for crafters of all skill levels!"

## FROM MCA PAGE 5

PHOTO BY SAM COHEN '26



Jaxson Goldsmith '23 gets pied in the face to raise money for the MCA.

up: a "Dunkin Donuts Date with Damsels." This item entailed a visit to Dunkin Donuts accompanied by members of the association "Damsels in Excess," a non-cis male comedy improv group. Sydney Holliday '23, a member of the group since her first-year said, "I'm pumped for tonight. We haven't had a comedy slam since before the pandemic!" It appears the comedy slam is re-emerging as vibrant as ever after an unprecedented hibernation.

Soon enough, it was Noah Katz's '23 turn to take a shot of hot sauce. Katz dramatically cleaned off a shot glass as the crowd clapped along rhythmically to "Rasputin." Katz began chugging and paused midway. The crowd erupted in cheers for him to continue on and that he did. "That's what you do in improv," Katz later commented when asked about his hot-shot experience.

In a turn of events, Zak committed to

having not one but two sharpie tattoos drawn on each of her arms. One was a beautiful turtle and the other was the statement, "I <3 you" in swooping bubble letters. Another auction item, "Comedy Glam," a makeover by the association's own Cal Martin-Singer '25, was fiercely warred over within the crowd. Shelby Mejia '24 came out victorious and had her makeup done by Martin-Singer right on the spot. "It was really random," Me-

jia said, "but a fun experience. It kind of embraces the spirit of the night." Martin-Singer, the expert artist, told The Muhlenberg Weekly that it was fun to perform a makeover for an MCA event and that it was very exciting when somebody proposed that.

"Everyone who attended was so supportive! We were really encouraged by all of the MCA members who came together to help make Comedy Slam happen. We even gained some new members at the event! I'm hoping that this event has students excited about the coming opportunities to learn more about comedy, and to see the ways that comedy can continue post-grad into the professional world," stated Reed.

By 9 p.m., Zak announced that the night's event had raised \$150. Even aside from the total, Sept. 17's Comedy Slam symbolized the prosperity and strength of the MCA.

Reed clarified, "We raised a little over \$200! The auction itself was so much fun because we got to bring members of all the groups on stage together, which usually only happens at showcase."

If you're curious about MCA and looking for a good time, come out and see for yourself on Nov. 18 and 19!

Zak finalized, "Everyone is so full of energy and funny, so it is a blast. I love being able to just hang out and laugh with everyone - especially the people who I am not in groups with."



## Living Writers

## Living Writers, alive once again

BY KEANNA PEÑA  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

“The right to memoir is intention,” said Amy Kurzweil, the first writer to kick off the long-awaited return for Muhlenberg’s Living Writers series. Living Writers, a course only offered every three years, is a unique opportunity for students to read recent works of contemporary writers and meet the authors for an intimate Q&A and live reading. This course allows students to explore and connect with authors of a wide range of genres, from graphic novels and plays to poetry and fiction novels.

This year, the course is being led by Associate Professor of English Linda Miller, Associate Professor of English Dawn Longsinger, Ph.D. and Visiting Assistant Professor of Theatre Gabriel Dean. Miller shared, “For students interested in writing and literature, Living Writers is invaluable. How often do you have the opportunity to ask a writer why and how they write? Or why they chose to place a specific detail in their book? Living Writers allows our students to meet, talk and understand writers—to understand the writing process. The experience can be life-altering.”

When asked what goes into preparing for a course like this, Longsinger explained, “The selection of Living Writers starts a long time before they come to campus, usually at least a year in advance, and it’s really a conversation within the Creative Writing Program and with the professors teaching the course. We each bring names to the table of authors whose work we’re excited about and/or that we think would make great readers, with an attention to trying to have a diversity of voices, with varying genres, identities and backgrounds and at different stages



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY IN BERLIN

Visiting writer and artist Amy Kurzweil in both real life (left) and in her drawings (right).

IMAGE COURTESY OF AMYKURZWEIL.COM



of their writing careers. This usually generates a mix of people who are truly at the top of their field and some newer authors.”

Thus, the Living Writers course allows students to break down a text and have the unparalleled opportunity to hear directly from the writer about their inspirations, writing practice and more. Alex Caban-Echevarria ‘23, a student enrolled in the course, said, “As an English major, I study a lot of writers that are not present in the discussion and may not even be alive. This class is an extremely rare opportunity in my college career so I wanted to take advantage of it.”

The first author to kick off the course was Amy Kurzweil, cartoonist and writer of the award winning graphic novel, “Flying Couch” (2016). Kurzweil’s previous work has been featured in The New Yorker, The Believer and other publications. “Flying Couch” is a memoir that weaves together the story of three generations

of women; Kurzweil, her mother and her grandmother, a World War II survivor. The Q&A, which is only accessible to those enrolled in the course, allowed students to ask Kurzweil questions about a wide range of topics, including publishing inquiries and in-depth questions about the text and her life.

Sarah Wedeking ‘24 said, “I loved how funny Kurzweil was and how personal she became when talking about herself and her family. I really enjoyed seeing her art style and the different mediums she used to express herself. As a writer and an artist, it was really inspiring to see her so vulnerable through her writing and her art.” This is what the Living Writers course is meant to do: inspire students. Longsinger commented that Kurzweil, “Started the book when she was in college, and I think that should inspire students to take their creative work seriously and understand that something they start while at Muhlenberg could be developed into

something publishable in the future.”

Later in the evening, there was a public live reading, where anyone from the greater Allentown community can come and ask questions. Kurzweil read from “Flying Couch” and previewed her upcoming graphic memoir, “Love: Artificial.” Caban-Echevarria said, “Amy Kurzweil was the first live reading so I didn’t know what to expect. I really enjoyed seeing the graphics projected and hearing her narrate her drawings that didn’t always have captions. It allowed me to appreciate the form more because I saw how each page could hold so much meaning.”

Gabi Hirshfield ‘24 added, “During Kurzweil’s talk something that really stayed with me was her discussion of the Holocaust and the ongoing dialogue that she has witnessed as a descendent of a survivor. Her description of her grandmother’s experience was obviously very striking and I found that hearing her talk about it in person was very powerful.”

Longsinger stated, “Seeing an author read and discuss their work reminds students that books are about humanity and connection [and] that they forge community amid readers. It also reminds students of the human labor behind a book—that it is shaped over time with great effort. And as such, it’s not genius but attention, practice and persistence that generate good art. Finally, it shows the Muhlenberg community that the literary arts are thriving and that they are an important humanistic enterprise, wherein we get to reflect on all the complexities of being human during this particular time.”

The Living Writers series will continue with playwright Steven Dietz on Oct. 2 with a public staged reading of his play “This Random World” and a conversation with Dean on Oct. 3.

FROM **PICTURE** PAGE 5

atre, the Civic Theatre of Allentown, to have screenings as well. Wong Kar-wai’s “In The Mood For Love” and Apichatpong Weerasethakul’s “Memoria” are a few of the recent films shown at the Civic and then discussed at MFA meetings for their unique style and attributes. Jackson also mentioned plans for a film festival at the Civic sometime within the semester.

Even in the face of COVID and a brief hiatus, the Muhlenberg Film Association has come back swinging. The club stands to present a space for artists and filmmakers to come together, share their love of film and collaborate on their projects. This is just a small taste of what the MFA has planned for the student body, with so much more on the horizon.

“Personally, I would like the club to make everyone that has any interest in film feel like they are welcome there and able to do whatever they want in the film world...any artist on earth can contribute to a film in some way...It is such a beautiful collaboration of so many arts and I

love the creativity it allows. I want people to be unafraid to take the leap and use their artistic voice because that’s what everyone deserves,” says Meistrich ‘24.

MFA has bi-weekly meetings on Tuesday afternoons at 5 p.m. in the Red Door. For more information, they can also be found on Instagram @bergfilmassociation, or through email at mfa@muhlenberg.edu. You can also find past and upcoming MFA work on Big Lettuce Productions on YouTube.

“We want to encourage students to engage with film and to create films! MFA seeks to have a shared space between students who like watching films and those who like making films... The best way to get involved in filmmaking is to start! You have to start somewhere and MFA is here to support you and encourage you!... Film is for everyone! It’s time we stop allowing this art form to be dominated by white men and dismantle the idea that film is inaccessible.” says Jackson.

FALL 2022

**The Living Writers Reading Series**

 <p><b>Amy Kurzweil</b> Public Reading, Book Sales &amp; Signing September 12, 2022   7 p.m.-8:15 p.m. Moyer Miller Forum</p>	 <p><b>Steven Dietz</b> Public Reading October 2, 2022   7 p.m.-9 p.m. Recital Hall, Baker Center for the Arts</p>	 <p><b>Jericho Brown</b> Public Reading, Book Sales &amp; Signing October 24, 2022   7 p.m.-8:15 p.m. Moyer Miller Forum</p>
 <p><b>Carolyn Forché</b> Public Reading, Book Sales &amp; Signing November 21, 2022   7 p.m.-8:15 p.m. Moyer Miller Forum</p>	 <p><b>Nnedi Okorafor</b> A Conversation, Book Sales &amp; Signing November 7, 2022   7 p.m.-8:15 p.m. Moyer Miller Forum</p>	 <p><b>Jia Tolentino</b> Public Reading, Book Sales &amp; Signing December 5, 2022   7 p.m.-8:15 p.m. Moyer Miller Forum</p>

This series is free and open to the public.



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## Paige's Page

BY PAIGE WEISBURG  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Hey, besties! Welcome back to another week of Paige's Page! This week it seems people have acclimated enough to campus that they are back to looking for love. And though I am no expert in that department, you keep asking these questions so I must be doing something right. Let's get started!

**Q** Hey Paige, do you think men and women can ever just be friends?

Hi, bestie! This is such a fun question and one I'm surprised Paige's Page has never answered before! Truthfully, I think they can. As a cis/het woman, I

can only give my perspective, but feel free to take this advice as it pertains to you because I think it's pretty general. Being friends with people that you are attracted to is a really tricky situation to put yourself into as fears of ruining your friendship are certainly a factor in one or both parties making a move. Sometimes, however, you can be repulsed by the person you are friends with in a physical way and those emotional connections can sneak up on you. God knows that has happened to me a few more times than I am proud to admit. I think setting boundaries for yourself in these situations helps to stop confusing platonic feelings as being romantic. However, some of the best relationships I have gotten the chance to see happen between those close to me started as beautiful friendships. Basically, just don't rule it out. Be friends with whoever you want to be friends with and worry about all of that later. Sometimes being forced to confront this question yourself will help you decide what your friendship with another person means to both of you.

**Q** Hi Paige, I was talking to someone I have a few classes with and will continue to be in

classes with but it didn't work out. How do I keep it from being weird in class?

Hey, bestie! The classroom is a difficult place to see people you used to be involved with but unfortunately, things like that are out of your control. Depending on the kind of person you are, that can be calming or more anxiety-inducing: choose your adventure! Anyways, we go to a small school and thus our classes are a lot smaller than other schools so you can't hide in a crowd of 40+ other students to avoid the one you don't want to see. And because of this, you must face them in this setting. Sit as far away from them as you can, hope that your professor doesn't like to make groups for projects themselves...or have a conversation to clear the air so things can be civil and normal. It's only weird if you make it weird, so the ball is in your court. Good luck, bestie!

**Q** Hi Paige! I got kind of catfished by a guy I was talking to on Tinder. He did not look like his pictures and he was kind of awful to me. Has this happened to you?

Hey, bestie! Sorry about this... eww... I

cannot say that this is something I have personally experienced. Online dating, as a concept, is something that I am generally confused about and also shamelessly bad at. Give me an ability to swipe for temporary male validation and I am happy as a clam, but I literally will not do anything other than that. Happy for you for breaking through the screen, or at least trying. Obviously, on these apps, you want to put your best foot forward and put pictures of yourself that put you in the best possible light. Ultimately, if you plan to actually see these people IRL then the pictures should probably look like you. Also if he was not nice to you, obviously you shouldn't see him again. He has to pick a struggle, is he going to be ugly, or is he going to be rude? You can do better.

Keep your eye out for Paige's Page Live, date and location coming soon!

You can submit questions to <https://tinyurl.com/paigespagequestion>. It will also be linked in my Instagram bio—@paigeweisburg and in The Muhlenberg Weekly Instagram Linktree.

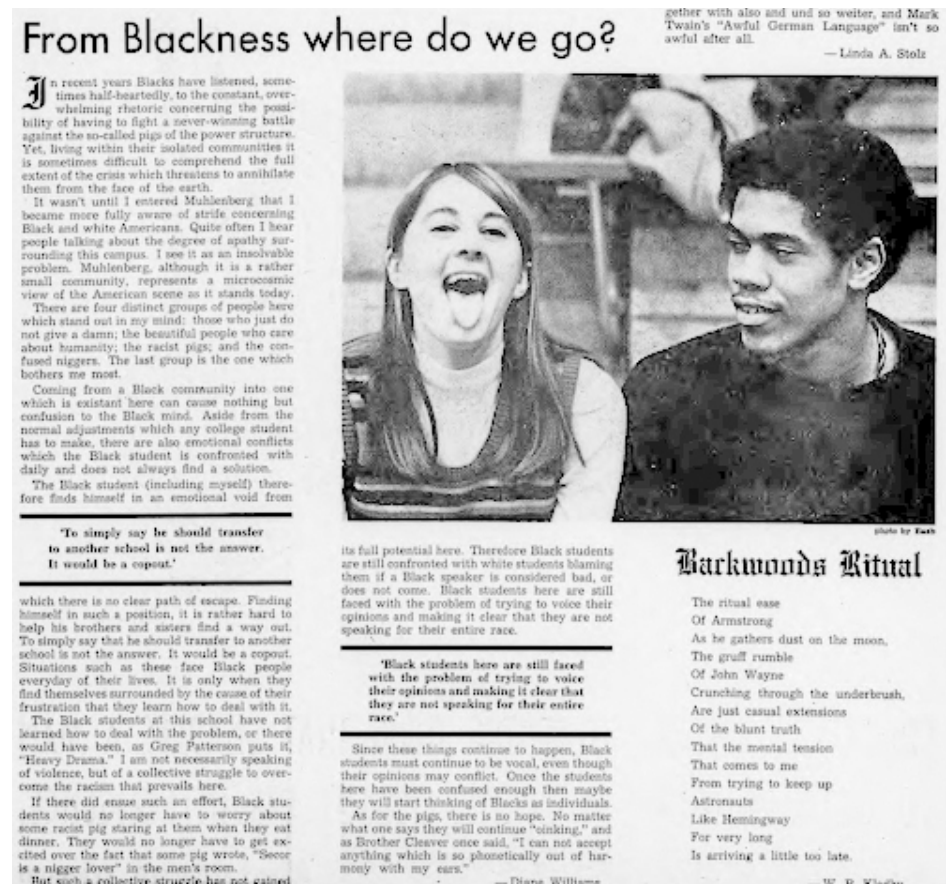
# Diane William's writing: An analysis of alumna works

*Continued from news section (page 3)*

BY GIOVANNI MERRIFIELD  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Diane really opens up about how she truly feels about Muhlenberg and the world she was living in. Muhlenberg, lacking any type of color, was very hard for Diane and the other Black students because for many of them it was the first time they had been in an environment that was all white. Diane mentions four main groups of people on campus, which are: "those who just do not give a damn; the beautiful people who care about humanity; the racist pigs; and the confused n\*\*\*\*\*. The last group is the one which bothers me most," she wrote in The Muhlenberg Weekly during the 1969-70 academic year. She saw these groups as a microcosm of the United States. The reason she was so concerned with the latter group was because Black students were just thrown into a huge ocean of white people, and were expected to survive without guidance. I assume that she hated how Black people had to go through college without having the white "cultural knowledge" of how to act a certain way to fit into this very white, white world. She was upset that she was so confused by these different norms. She couldn't just be her true, authentic self because she would stand out even more, looking as if she didn't know anything, at least that's how she thought white people would look at her.

There was and still is so much pressure for each Black person to be the spokesperson/representative of their community. If one Black person speaks wrongly and is not perfect around a white person, then white people just automatically assume and generalize that all Black people



An article authored by Diane Williams.

are the same. Unfortunately, it's all about image. How does one appear to a white person? Are they following the majority's etiquette, etc? This was very important because if one were not to follow these norms, they were then looked down upon, seen as stupid, and had the possibility of not being given as many opportunities due to the lack of understanding of a culture that was not theirs. Diane hated how Black students were forced to manipulate and change themselves so that they could be seen as human, and as decent people. This is why she felt it was her role, and other Black students' roles as well, to speak up and vocalize their concerns and

struggles so they could be heard for once. Diane felt it was important to express one's self and have a voice because that is how change happens. Diane spoke up for what she believed in and encouraged others to do so as well, hence the reason why she wrote in The Muhlenberg Weekly; so someone would hear her.

This was just a little preview to who Diane Williams was, you can learn more this Saturday, Sept. 24 at 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. where I will be presenting my summer research project on Diane in the CA. Feel free to stop by to learn more or to say hi.

(P.S. Be on the lookout for some Diane Williams merch and other things.)

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor ([bergweeklyoped@gmail.com](mailto:bergweeklyoped@gmail.com)) or the Editor-in-Chief ([weeklyeditor@gmail.com](mailto:weeklyeditor@gmail.com)) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.





magic goblin saga/

BY DES SUAREZ  
STAFF WRITER

`1.  
a magic goblin stole my teeth  
stole my magic  
stole whatever their goblin fingers could reach  
a magic goblin haunts me while i sleep, the power to take from under me what i had  
been holding so dear  
a magic goblin stole my teeth  
one by one until i was left with vulnerable raw gums, unstoppable  
bleeding and a feeling that the extensions of my teeth,  
a fear that my bones  
would be next. a magic goblin stole  
my  
teeth.  
a magic goblin keeps me trapped beneath grotesque and hardened soles,  
toes sinking into the back of my head, squeezing my gums down into cold cement,  
a magic goblin keeps me down, promising me relief,  
promising me more teeth,  
but each new grown from frag-  
mented bone is  
canaled from my howling mouth with no warning,  
no respite,  
no care,  
a magic goblin wont stop taking every fucking piece of me  
a magic goblin walks with me every day, every moment i hold my tired eyes open for  
hours on  
end.  
i feel sick with the magic the goblin gives me, the magic eating my insides as  
the goblin  
tears away at my outer shell. i feel like im disintegrating.  
a magic goblin is **stealing** my teeth.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DES SUAREZ

Ode to My Immigrant Family

BY MARIA RIVERA  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

You grow roots where you stand  
the same roots you carefully  
pulled, packed, unwrapped  
again and again  
You settle in rooms that are too small  
a single window that envisions  
a dream bigger than  
America, the land that doesn't love you  
but your roots never wither  
Your Spanish never withers  
I wear my accent like it'll never get dirty  
I will not wash it in white,  
You taught me it's easy to get mixed up in colors  
You are the teacher that never went to school,  
in each exhaled tradition,  
sits the memory of a resilient Latina,  
My mother

You move through a language you barely know  
You are powerful, knowledgeable, you are  
here - visible,  
even when people don't want to see you or understand you or love you  
your roots are far too long to get lost in  
translation, through generations  
your roots will still be there  
ready *para los que siguen*



PHOTO BY OMER UNLU ON PEXELS



PHOTO BY ELI FRANCIS ON UNSPLASH

Acknowledgements

BY KEANNA PEÑA  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

I look at the bold letters  
Tattooed down your spine  
1  
I see, even from my desk, the places  
We've been  
208  
I would daydream about you  
And remember how you bruised me.  
718  
I should hate you for it  
It's my fault, I should've stopped you  
When I reached  
366  
Yet here I am, sitting at my desk, com-  
pelled  
To be with you again  
814



# Mules gain momentum early in season

BY JOSH BOTEL  
STAFF WRITER

Muhlenberg volleyball came out Sept. 13 with an overwhelming victory against a competitive Moravian University team. Moravian came into the game with an impressive 5-1 record, despite these odds, the Mules came out and dominated.

Coach Rob Vickers commented on the team's victory. "I was very happy with how the team played for the most part. It was our best start to a match so far this season, and probably our most complete match to date. We even got the experience of coming back from a late deficit, which can prove to be valuable down the road if we find ourselves in a similar situation."

"In general, we're definitely a group of competitive girls. We know how to push each other and stay supportive during crunch time," said Christina Marcin '26, who had an impressive 17 kills during the match against Moravian. Marcin continues, "I would say that playing smart is the key. It's really important to see the court and understand where their defense is and work your way around it. Being resilient is also an important aspect to getting kills during the game, especially when faced with a big block." Marcin's mindset leads to her multitude of kills during the match. As a first-year, she has been a standout performer for the team.

Another indispensable player was Caley Tereska '23 who served four aces during the match against Moravian. She said that, "The volleyball game against Moravian started off with a strong finish to the first set with a score of 25-9. After winning the first set, the Muhlenberg volleyball team brought the momentum in the second set. During my service run of this set, I was confident with my serves, bringing the team a total of four aces. I

played volleyball in high school with-or-against a handful of the girls on the Moravian volleyball team. Since I knew some tendencies of the Moravian players from scouting and previous high school games, it was easier to understand where to target my serves."

The turning point of the match was the third set. The Mules were trailing 22-13 in the third set when Vickers called a timeout. He said to the team during the timeout, "It starts with defense. We have been playing such relentless defense thus far. Win or lose, we haven't seen that falter. Other than that, our team is gelling really well right now, and I think that plays a huge part."

After gaining a few points back the third set still looked out of reach. The Mules were trailing 24-16 when Julia Ficon '24 came up to serve. "I felt pretty calm during my serving run. I knew all I had to do was keep the ball in play and my teammates would execute our defense and offense to keep the run going. We all have so much trust in each other that it was easy to be relaxed during what could have been a really stressful situation." Julia Ficon, with that confidence, was able to help lift the team to a 9-0 run to take the lead in the third set. Ficon adds, "The team was able to get the momentum back in the third set because we knew we had the ability and confidence to completely shift the game. Our staff and teammates have all the confidence in the world in us and told us that we could turn it around, so we did! I think we really focused on executing the little things like getting a good first pass and letting the right play to develop; we weren't frantic and didn't rush any plays." Even while helping lead the team back, Ficon said it was a team effort.

Another important aspect of this match was the home crowd. Memorial



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS

Rachel Jacobs '25 launches the ball over the net during practice.

Hall echoed each time the Mules scored. The football team, wrestling team, both basketball teams and many students cheered on the Mules. "The home crowd is always such an important part of getting excited during a big game. Cheering and support from the crowd makes playing so much more competitive and helps with the overall momentum of the game," Marcin comments. Tereska adds, "At the Moravian game, we had so many supporters ranging from family members, to friends, the athletic department, and other Muhlenberg sports teams such as baseball, football and wrestling. The home crowd brought the energy into the

gym the second that the game started. Our team was able to feed off of this energy throughout the entire game."

"Our crowd has been a huge help during our first two home matches. They provide the energy when we make those big plays and give us the support to come back if need be. It has been such a fun atmosphere to be in. KEEP SHOWING UP AND KEEP BEING LOUD!" Coach Vicker comments.

The Mules next home game is Tuesday, Sept. 24 against the Dickinson College Red Devils and hopefully the same energy from Wednesday's game will be carried into it.

## Assistant coach brings a new level of connection to the squad in season

BY EVAN SCHLOTTERBECK  
ROOKIE WRITER

There is no question that Tyler Madeira has the fire burning inside of him to push and lead the Muhlenberg men's soccer team to future success. However, at only age 24, an important method of doing so may be found not only in him as a coach, but also in his relationship with his players. Madeira sustains a high level of respectability with his players while simultaneously being someone they can relate to.

When he found out the full-time assistant coaching position for the Muhlenberg men's soccer team had opened up, Madeira knew it was the opportunity he had been craving since his time playing at the collegiate level at Bloomsburg University had ended.

"I'm from the area," he said. "I knew

[Head] Coach Topping. He actually recruited me to join the staff, and I was still open to being around the game." After taking one step into the real world, Madeira knew the beautiful game was something he could not live without.

Even though Madeira has been playing soccer his whole life, this was his first official, full-time coaching job. "I loved being part of a collegiate team," he said. "I have always found myself to be a leader on the field and now being a different type of leader off the field is something that I am coming to love."

There is a fine line of professionalism Madeira needs to maintain between himself and the players, though. At times, that maintenance can come across as stern and harsh. Still, the relationship he has formed with individual players using his ability to empathize with what they may be going through is crucial to team

success and connection.

"As I mentioned before, taking a role and leadership have been ways to distinguish myself as the coach," he said. "Getting your point across, pulling guys aside during training, making that relationship on the field makes the transition off the field easier."

"Part of my role too, though, is being there for the guys to talk about other things aside from soccer," Madeira continues. "While understanding my role as a younger person, I can connect with this age group well. I have been doing academic meetings with guys to help them stay on top of things... or any other issues they may be having... [this] is one way I can connect with them as well."

It is safe to say that Madeira has settled in well with his new squad. Within a year, he has managed to build relationships with each player and has done wonders

PHOTO BY EVAN SCHLOTTERBECK '25



Coach Tyler Madeira works with goalies.

for the Mules. His ability to lead, his commitment to the team, and the mindset he carries with him are contagious. "Of course, a championship would be awesome," says Madeira. "But also to get better as a coach and a person while taking pride in learning is something I hope to accomplish going forward."



# The Mikuta duo

*Brotherhood and leadership on the soddy pitch*

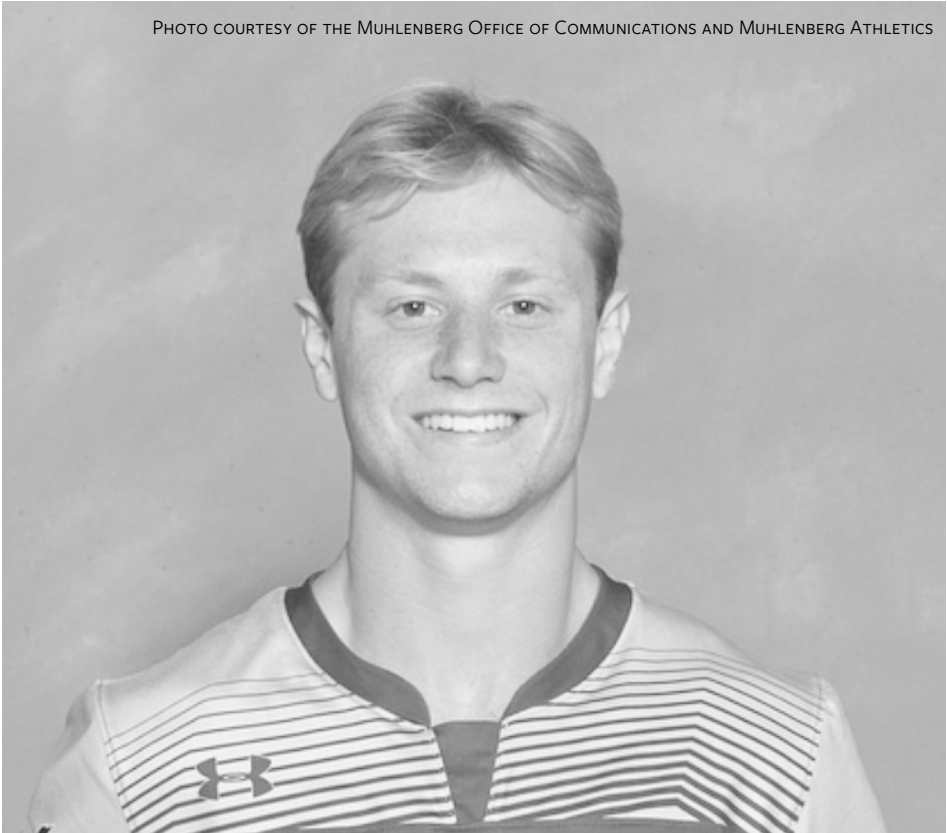
BY JACOB KLAFF  
ROOKIE WRITER

How important is brotherhood in sports? Muhlenberg College soccer player, Zach Mikuta '24, can answer that question better than anyone. Mikuta is in his third year with the team. Ever since his first year, he has been a valuable player, contributing many meaningful minutes in several games. But this year brings changes for Mikuta, through the team and his everyday life. As a leader, he is trying to be more vocal. He is aware of the big shoes he has to fill, "I have to earn the team's respect and talk when I feel I have earned it. Setting the example at practice by showing full intensity, full effort and doing that consistently."

Another change in Mikuta's life is having his younger brother, Trevor Mikuta '26, join him on the soccer team. Trevor's arrival is a transition for Mikuta, and he admits it is a little weird. They did play

in high school together, but they were younger and more immature and he feels that they are closer now after being away for college. When asked if he thought there was more responsibility on top of soccer because of his duty to take care of his brother, he responded by saying, "Absolutely, it is my job to show him the ropes and help him with the transition, and it is something I wish I had. I had older guys who helped me, and I want to help him like that. I also want to let him make his own mistakes." He acknowledges that there is some difficulty in bridging the gap between letting his brother run free and being protective.

Now with these two new responsibilities, there is a question of this creating too much pressure in Mikuta's life. When asked about the pressure to be more of a role model, not just for his brother but for the rest of the younger players on the team, Mikuta said, "I wouldn't say there is pressure. You have to be a role model for yourself, and it will bleed towards the younger team. It is not an outward pressure but more of inner struggle, more of pressure from myself, but it is not bad pressure," said Mikuta. This pressure



Zach Mikuta '23 is ready to be a leader and a brother.

helps motivate him and allows him to play not just for his real brother but for all of the brothers on the team and, in the end, makes them all closer. Mikuta is ready for this season and ready to take on the re-

sponsibility head-on, and he is excited for what is to come next year while perfecting the Mikuta chemistry.

## 22 sports, one team

BY CARLYSSA CHEEWAH  
ROOKIE WRITER

On Saturday Sept. 17, many people showed up in support of the Muhlenberg women's soccer game against the McDaniel College Green Terror. The event showcased much of the women's talent and how well they work together. There were many strong notes throughout the game, such as Emily DeAngelo '22 and Savannah Rode '24 in sync in the defensively, as well as Cassie Burke '24 and Bri Astbury '24 in the offensive position. Alexandra Chirinkin '23 had amazing free kicks and was quick on her feet in preventing the opposing team from turning from the outside to cross the ball to the center and score. Unfortunately, these performances did not result in a Mules win, losing to the Green Terror 6-1.

The Muhlenberg community provides overflowing support in the stands. Rachel Saxton '25, point guard for the Muhlenberg women's basketball team explains how the energy from the fans, "shows how close of a community that Muhlenberg is." She adds, "As an athlete, when I'm on the court and when I'm working, I think being there and cheering on the team really helps how the team performs and amps up their intensity." Amongst the supporters were the men's soccer team. Captain DeAngelo comments, "The men's and women's soccer teams definitely both strongly support one another." The two teams recently started off the season water rafting, which DeAngelo described as, "a lot of fun." The teams do other team bonding events frequently throughout the season together. One of their favorite events being their formal they do every year. DeAngelo makes it clear, "when [they] have the chance to [they] are in the

stands rooting each other on."

Even though the team's schedules don't always allow them to be there for each other, they do what they can to support each other, even if it's watching their games through live feeds on the bus ride to their own game.

The Mules' chemistry appears to be the best it has been in the past few years. Brandin Osborne '23 discusses how, "in terms of team comradery, [the team is] on the same page." The team's chemistry has intensified with an off field connection, Osborne continues. "As a team player the bond with my team would more so be about... fighting for the guy next to you... and always putting in your best effort." The connection this team has built was obvious during Sept. 17's match against McDaniel.

As the whistle blew, it was as if a switch had gone off, and the trust built in this team spoke for itself. In tune with his teammates' movements, Taylan Akdag '23 quickly and effortlessly glanced at his teammates, knowing they would be in position for the perfect pass for Chris Richards '23 to score within the first five minutes. This set him up to set a new school record for the fastest goals within the first and second halves! Caleb Herring '24 notes that, "everyone is accountable [for] each other," emphasizing the trust they have built as a team. Their trust made the spectating experience more exciting, as their team's dynamic and fluency as a unit brought life to the field. The game could not have been more eventful.

After the first goal, it was clear that the Mules were "locked in and working together," explained Noah Pietila '25—as Muhlenberg won 3-1 against the McDaniel Green Terror. With a promising start to the game, the Mules solidified their



Chris Richards '23 celebrates after record-breaking goal.

win with Akdad scoring with 22 minutes left in the game and Richards' second goal, with an assist from Tarin Morris '23. While the offense was well coordinated, the defense really blew the stands away. Every time the ball was on the Mules' end, they were quick to attack and take control of the ball to return it to the offense. It was exciting to see how the defensive line functioned with a newer goalie, especially because it is a "young group" as Pietila '25 puts it, and they are building a newer dynamic from previous years.

Pietila, who shared his experience with Josh Richards '23, the team's fifth year captain, stating that he "really leads... and inspires" by getting the team to "perform

to the best of their ability." His leadership style creates an environment where people can feel accepted. Taye Edwards '26 commented on how Richards' leadership contributes to a stronger team community that allows for an easier transition into Muhlenberg. He further states how the team is a "second family" which makes him want to, "play harder for [his teammates]."

The games are an extension of how the team acts in terms of social cohesion, connection, and trust. You can't have one without the other. Their bond off of the field supports collaboration on the field, and the way that they play reflects this.



## Opinion/Editorial: Can you survive an XC workout?

*Matthew Baker-Grunza '25 investigates at risk of life*

By MATTHEW BAKER-GRUNZA  
SPORTS EDITOR

"Make sure to control your breath and try to detach from the pain... you can survive it." - Jason Ivey '23

One day Olivia Oberman '24 asked, "What if we did a sports article about whether someone can survive a cross-country workout?" Nonchalantly some guy with a death wish said, "I'll write that."

That guy was me.

Two years ago I ran my best 5k time of 19:12 at 6:11 min/mi pace. This came after nine months of grueling cross-training. I would ride nearly 140 miles on the bike each week and run 25 too. My average of 17 miles on the bike and four miles running is a heavy taper that could generously be called a taper. Not to mention the most time I spend with the track team is either at lunch in Seegers Union or attending what we'll call "weekend activities" on 22nd Street. My senior 5k time had turned into a freshman 15 in the span of a year. So of course I said, "I'll write that."

Fast forward to Sept. 12, I'm asking the guy whose profile picture on Muhlenberg Athletics looks like he's doing the "I'm chill like that" Tik Tok dance and captain of the team Jason Ivey '23 if I could do a workout with him for The Weekly. Ivey, being his typical social and energetic self, said, "Sure!" As Ivey began to explain the workout for the next day, I caught out of the corner of my eye a devilish grin creeping across co-captain Conner Soderstedt's '23 face. Now, I can't quote his thought process but he was probably happy to see a NARP (Non-Athletic Regular Person) ignorantly ask to be tortured by Trexler Park pavement.

Ivey explained that the workout for the team that day was going to be a Fartlek run. This workout is meant to train a runner's endurance at a higher intensity and train their active recovery zone. Ivey and I planned to run from the LSC to Trexler Park, approximately one and a half miles; then we'd "dig in" to the workout with two minutes at six min/mi and one minute recovery at eight min/mi 12 times, finishing the workout with a mile and a half cool down back to my training grounds, the dining hall.



Matthew Baker-Grunza '25 crumbles under the extreme pressure training with Jason Ivey '23.

PHOTO BY JINETT RAMOS PHOTOGRAPHY

It was 11 o'clock, I had just finished my class with Professor of Political Science Giacomo Gambino, Ph.D., where he gave a rousing lecture about Immanuel Kant. Now, it was time to face the music... or more likely Ivey's well-toned calves as he gracefully left me in the dust.

Some wonder why runners like running... actually, most. Is it the runner's high? Shorts that are way too small for you? The health benefits? A slight case of masochism? For Ivey, a lifelong athlete and former Muhlenberg Varsity Soccer player before injuries sidelined him, it is the comradery, tenacity and challenge. Plus, if his plan to attend medical school through a serve-back scholarship program through the Navy is any indication—a slight case of masochism.

During our warmup, Ivey and I discussed topics ranging from his years in student government to our common passion for finding hidden gems in the Allentown area, whether it be a covered bridge or what the cross country team calls "the field of dreams." We found a common love for doing a thorough job in whatever our current endeavor may be because we believe all arguments must have nuance. This is the human part of running. This is the human part of the sport. Those shared moments in between labored breaths with two peers, best friends, teammates or strangers. The same bated breaths captivate the hearts and minds of fans as we

wait to see who crosses the finish line or makes the diving save. In sports, we all breathe as one.

Beep... beep... beep. Quickly, the pleasant conversation dropped away and our focus shifted to the task at hand. Our first two minutes went by quickly. My legs weren't screaming, they were just happy to be running at 6:10 again. The minute of active recovery sped by. Ivey told me, "Make sure to control your breath and try to detach from the pain... you can survive it." Survive it?!

We continued like this for the next 12 minutes, about a third of the way through the workout when I said to Ivey, "We should make sure to stay at a faster click during recovery." Famous last words.

About a minute into the fourth interval, my body began to have a weird sensation crossing my chest and down to my legs. My legs didn't feel tired, but I felt dizziness in my chest. I had run out of energy. My legs were ready to keep going but my endurance at a higher intensity had dropped significantly.

I finished my workout with one more interval at a seven-minute pace (probably where I should have run the whole time). Ivey continued his workout posting negative splits on the last few. Something I certainly couldn't have survived.

As we jogged back to campus the conversation continued as it had before, exchanging training tips, such as Ivey's new love of aqua jogging. A workout that

allows runners to develop their form and endurance, without the hazards of weight-bearing workouts.

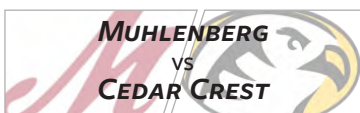
Once we reached Scotty Wood stadium, we both looked down at our watches and realized we had to run another tenth of a mile. There was some instinct in both of us to end with round numbers. Together, we had totaled 14.5 miles with high-intensity work all before noon. A great start to the day for both of us. Even better preparation for Ivey's upcoming race.

On Sept. 16, the cross country teams went against some heavy-hitting schools such as Villanova and the University of Pennsylvania in the main line invitational. Both the men's and women's teams put on admirable performances with only a 14 minute gap in total time compared to the DI Villanova Wildcats. Ivey hit his personal goal of sub-24 for the four-mile course with a time of 23:46 (5:57 min/mi). The Fartlek training had paid off, he ran a great race and I was still in recovery.

If you enjoyed getting to know more about Ivey and cross country, get ready for Oct. 20 when The Weekly sports section will be releasing an article on how the Mules use their three-week training block to prepare for the Centennial Conference Championships.

Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Sept. 22 - Sept. 29

### Women's Tennis



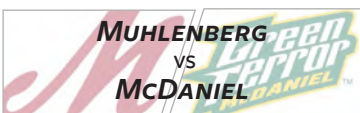
Fri, Sept. 23 @ 3:30 p.m.  
Kern Field Courts

### Field Hockey



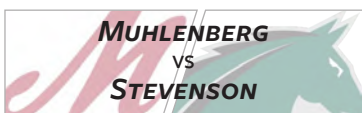
Fri, Sept. 23 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Scotty Wood Stadium

### Football



Sat, Sept. 24 @ 2:00 p.m.  
Scotty Wood Stadium

### Volleyball



Sat, Sept. 24 @ 4:00 p.m.  
Memorial Hall



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

This edition of the 'Berg Weekly is dedicated to beloved professor Judith Parker, Ph.D.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2022  
VOLUME CXLIV, ISSUE III

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## NEWS

Grant for education and alcohol awareness awarded to 'Berg.

read on page 3



## ARTS & CULTURE

Shining a light on 'Berg Production

read more on page 5



## OP/ED

Keanna Peña shares a reflection on asexuality.

read more on page 9



## SPORTS

Tony Merchlin-sky '24 is the match.

read more on page 11



# College sees decline in enrollment

By KATHERINE CONLON  
Co-News Editor

Muhlenberg has consistently prided itself on being a small school where students can engage one-on-one with professors and gain a rich liberal arts education. Now, these traits which once served as attractive factors for high school students choosing where to spend their next four years may be the reason why fewer high schoolers are deciding to become Mules.

Melissa Falk '92, dean of admissions and financial aid, noted that at their point of entry the class of 2023 was at 538 students. In 2022, the incoming class measures 420 students. Looking at the statistics from a broader level, according to the Registrar, the total enrollment of full-time residential undergraduate students in the fall of 2015 was 2,178. Conversely, this semester saw 1,857 of these students entering the College—a decline of 15 percent.

The Weekly spoke with sev-

eral administrators at the College in an attempt to determine the cause(s) of this drop, and the policies being put in place to counteract it.

One of the primary factors presented was a dip in the number of births at the time the first-year class was born. Vice President for Enrollment Management Meg Ryan explained this noting, “the enrollment challenge is not unique to Muhlenberg College, it’s part of a larger national trend that we have been preparing for for years—the speed of which was accelerated during the pandemic. Nationally, the number of high school graduates has been on a decline with a projected drop off in 2026.”

Provost Laura Furge echoed this sentiment and added to it saying, “Birth rates are declining. That’s one thing, but we typically have more immigration, which also leads to higher high school graduate rates. But that also has declined in terms of the number of people who are not necessarily born in the U.S., but

come here and complete high school and go to college.”

The U.S. Census has noted a significant decline in birth rates due in part to the 2008 recession, which reduced births by nearly 2.3 million in the U.S. between 2008 and 2013. However, the majority of the first-year class was born between 2003 and 2004, before this drop-off. Looking at national statistics, there is only a drop of 0.7 births per 1,000 people between 2000 (the earliest most of the senior class was born) and 2003, not enough to constitute such a large dip in enrollment. Looking more specifically at New Jersey, the state where the majority of Muhlenberg students reside, there was only a 0.1 decrease per 1,000 people between 2000 and 2003.

In regards to immigration lessening, the Migration Policy Institute noted that, “The number of people granted legal permanent residence in the United States in FY [fiscal year] 2003 dropped 34 percent. The total fell from 1.06 million the previous year to just under 706,000.”

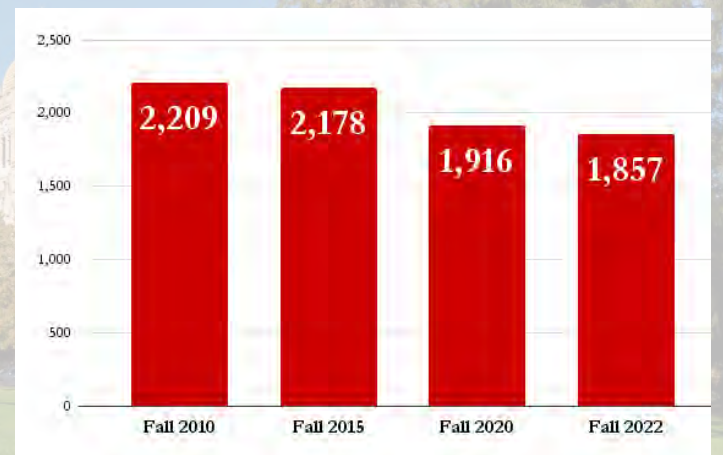


PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERGCOLLEGE.EDU

Even though the number of individuals granted permanent residence in the U.S. dropped significantly in this year, one wonders if these numbers account for the considerable drop in Muhlenberg’s student body.

Director of Women’s and Gender Studies and Professor of English and Film Studies Francesca Coppa, Ph.D., outlined that Muhlenberg’s classification as a college and not a university could be affecting the College’s enrollment. She explained, “it’s slightly unevenly distributed in that... we’re [a] college, we’re not a university—Muhlenberg College, not Muhlenberg University. A university is usually a collection of colleges that has a graduate school, and might also have [a] school that does something really pre-professional, like... nursing, hotel management [or] engineering. We don’t do nursing, that’s not our brand. And it’s not the traditional brand of the liberal arts college.”

Falk noted that many stu-

SEE DECLINE PAGE 4

# Alumni weekend jam-packed with fun

By SAMANTHA TEMPKIN  
Contributing Writer

This past weekend, hundreds of Muhlenberg alumni returned to campus to celebrate the College’s annual Alumni Weekend! Muhlenberg’s Alumni Affairs team spent nine months planning three days filled with entertainment, memories and

opportunities to reconnect with both fellow classmates and the current Muhlenberg community.

The Alumni Affairs department found ways to comply with varying comfortability levels in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring that Alumni Weekend would remain a safe,

SEE ALUMNI PAGE 3

# 'Berg celebrates Constitution Day

By MATTHEW KLINGER  
Assistant News Editor

As part of the fall 2022 election series, the Muhlenberg political science department hosted a webinar with Franita Tolson, J.D., a professor and the George T. and Harriet E. Pfleger Chair at the University of Southern California Gould School of

Law. The event focused heavily on the 1965 Voting Rights Act and the recent trend of increasing voting restrictions across the country.

When talking about the Voting Rights Act, Tolson said that it “fundamentally changed the political complexion of the South. African Americans went from

SEE DAY PAGE 4



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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The Muhlenberg Weekly strives for accuracy in reporting and writing, but we acknowledge that mistakes happen. Readers are invited to submit corrections about errors in articles, and they should be submitted to weeklyeditor@gmail.com. Corrections are also brought to our staff's attention by our own editors and writers. Our staff will review the suggested correction, consult with the author of the article, and issue the appropriate correction. Online corrections are located at the bottom of the article. Print corrections are located within the paper, on the page indicated in the online edition. However, The Weekly does not grant take-down requests for articles.

## ADVERTISING POLICY

We request that advertising material be submitted by the Monday preceding publication at 5 p.m. If materials have not been received at that time, the advertisement will not run and the advertiser is still responsible for 100% payment. We reserve the right to decline any advertisement that is misleading, inaccurate, fraudulent, or deemed generally unacceptable. This determination will be made by the Business Staff in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief. The Muhlenberg Weekly maintains a distinction between its news & editorial content and advertising. As such, advertisements will not be accepted if they imitate the general style of The Weekly, intentionally or unintentionally. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: headlines, bylines, fonts, and column-arrangements. In order to make this distinction, The Weekly also reserves the right to include the word "advertisement" on any advertisement that is deemed too native.

# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

09/19/2022

Liberty Street: Report of fire alarm from steam from shower, system silenced and reset.

09/21/2022

Trumbower: Report of sick student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student refused further treatment or transport. Baker Center for the Arts: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student transported to hospital via friends.

On Campus Location: Report of found bag, owner later claimed item.

09/22/22

Moyer Hall: Report of found laptop, owner later claimed item. Liberty Street: Report of possible attempt to take bicycle, investigation to continue.

East Hall: Report of found key fob, item later returned to owner.

2201 Chew Street: Report of fire alarm, upon arrival no cause could be found, system silenced and reset.

Off Campus Location: Report of disturbance, individuals spoken to, investigation to continue.

Martin Luther Lot: Report of hit and run to vehicle causing damage to bumper, investigation to continue.

09/23/2022

M.I.L.E. House: Report of fire alarm from false alarm CO2,

Plant Operations responded, system silenced and reset. Prosser Lot: Report of minor motor vehicle accident, parties exchanged information, no further incident.

CFA South: Report of injured student, student transported to hospital by Campus Safety Officer.

09/24/2022

N. 23rd Street: Report of fire alarm from cooking, system silenced and reset.

Martin Luther Hall: Report of elevator stuck with individuals inside, Allentown Fire Department responded and opened the elevator.

Benfer Hall: Report of students seen driving golf cart, golf cart later found, students identified and spoken to, no further incident.

09/25/2022

Martin Luther Lot: Report of found wallet, unknown to whom item belongs, wallet placed in lost and found locker.

New Science Building: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student refused further treatment or transport.

Prosser Hall: Report of fire alarm from item being left on lightbulb, system silenced and reset.

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# Responsible alcohol consumption education: granted

## *Muhlenberg receives a two-year grant to educate students on alcohol awareness.*

BY HARRY GLICKLIN  
LAYOUT EDITOR

With a two-year grant awarded by the Pennsylvania Liquor Board, Muhlenberg is working to ensure that party nights on campus are as safe as possible, while continuing to respect students' personal, legal drinking choices.

The grant, available to Pennsylvania colleges every two years, was initially applied for with "two explicit goals: (1) to enhance our educational efforts regarding safe and legal consumption of alcohol by giving the silent majority of non and low-risk drinkers a greater voice, and (2) to enhance utilization of Campus Safety as a resource to assist students who may be at risk for negative consequences from the dangers of high-risk drinking to receive the medical assistance they may need," according to Allison Williams, dean of students.

Alcohol consumption and availability has become socially synonymous with college parties and gatherings, as these substances are more accessible to students than in previous high school years. Additionally, upon consumption, alcohol may serve as a relaxer or destresser for notably over-committed students. Tim Silvestri, director of counseling services remarks via the College website on August 2, 2022 that "[Muhlenberg's] data shows that the vast majority of Muhlenberg students either don't drink or do so in a responsible manner that doesn't interfere with their academics, relation-

ships or personal integrity." In essence, the issue is more in relation to the student body's perception of drinking, in that it is not as common and pressured as one may believe. While Muhlenberg will continue to lawfully respond to alcohol-related incidents, the main focus of this grant is less about policing illegal drinking, and more centered around education.

Roughly half of this funding from the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board will be put towards educational programs that look to, "give greater voice to the vast majority of students who view high-risk drinking as a danger to the intoxicated student and others in their immediate surroundings," Williams noted. It is understood that the misconception regarding the amount of drinking on campus is just as harmful as the actual consumption.

Muhlenberg seeks to ensure that all students feel safe on campus, regardless of their personal choices. According to Levi Roush '24 (of legal drinking age), "this is a small enough school that people are always looked out for. People go to parties with friends and know that someone will be there to take care of them." Roush also referred to Muhlenberg's medical amnesty policy, which reflects that, in simplicity, a student who seeks medical assistance from Campus Safety for one of their peers who is under the influence will not be charged with policy violations for their potential alcohol use. It is unclear if this policy applies to all people present at the time Campus



'Berg was given the grant to help educate students about safe drinking and help to make them aware of potential risks.

Safety is called or only to the student who made the call and the student in need of medical attention. Roush felt that this policy allowed students to feel comfortable reaching out to Campus Safety in the event of an alcohol-related emergency while alluding to the fact that this is not a commonality.

Both Williams and Silvestri concur that the school will continue to support students who choose to drink, alongside those who do not. All of this will be done while educating both groups on the harmful effects and risks associated with alcohol, including the potential academic, medical and legal consequences. Roush believed that taking the stance on, "anti-drinking is only going to worsen the

problem," stating that making the topic "taboo" will only make it more secretive, and therefore dangerous. "Drinking is going to keep happening, both underage drinking and legal... It's always good to be educated, to have an understanding of personal limits and how to take care of yourself. It's a good thing," said Roush.

Muhlenberg wants to ensure that students are aware of the potential risks of drinking, while recognizing that the choice of abstinence will not isolate them. Over the next two years, with this additional grant funding, the College will continue to support students' choices by increasing alcohol education and helping students make informed decisions on consumption.

### FROM ALUMNI PAGE 1

fun experience for everyone involved. Alumni were given a choice of having either a red, yellow or green name tag lanyard which indicated how comfortable they were with social distancing and interaction. The Muhlenberg Alumni Weekend app used when the event was completely virtual in 2020 was used again this year to offer alumni who could not attend in-person the opportunity to participate virtually in events such as the Alumni Art Show and the State of the College session with President Kathleen Harring. Muhlenberg trivia, "The Mule Marketplace" and an alumni-owned business feature were also included in the app for anyone's use.

Both the Alumni Tailgate and the Homecoming Fair were held on Saturday Sept. 24, providing alumni with countless opportunities to reconnect with their peers and engage with life on campus once again. The tailgate included reunion year tents as well as student organization tents for groups such as Emerging Leaders, Greek life organizations, athletic organizations and "Graduates of the Last Decade."

"The tailgate is really fun because it's a chance to see old classmates and just be in a relaxed environment. It's great to relive the great experiences we had here," said Ellen (Polakoff) Gesner '82. Gesner is the Reunion Chair for her class and was celebrating the class of 1982's 40th an-



From left to right, Lisa Farbstein '82, Jennifer (Downey) Dussault '82, Sharon Hartline '82, and Tambria (Johnson) O'Shaughnessy '82 posing with their green lanyards.

niversary at the Alumni Tailgate. Gesner indicated that this was the largest turnout for Alumni Weekend that the class of 1982 has ever seen. She spent a year using social media for outreach and assisting in planning for this weekend. Gesner continued, "It just feels really good to give back. I spent four years here and it gave me the gift of a wonderful education. It just feels good to really give back in any way you can." Linda Wallburg '82, the president of her class, also could be found at the tailgate under her reunion tent. "It's fun seeing friends, it's fun connecting with classmates older and younger. It's just feeling that feeling on campus I get when I pull up, it's a great feeling," said Wallburg.

"It feels pretty darn good to be back because right this second, I am with all of my former teammates. We were invited

back because this is the 30th anniversary of us winning the MAC conference championship for volleyball... It's really cool to be back with some amazing athletes," said Jenny Sherwood '95 on her way to watch the second match of the volleyball tri-match. Linda Hicks '94, Sherwood's teammate, said, "I haven't been here since I graduated from Muhlenberg and the fact that I'm seeing my teammates is the reason I'm back... I really appreciate the experiences I got from Muhlenberg as far as my team[s], basketball and volleyball. It really helped me grow as an adult and I met some really wonderful people."

The Homecoming Fair offered endless entertainment for everyone, including performances from student groups, a petting zoo, glitter tattoos, inflatables, cotton candy and popcorn stations, the Marti Zone and giveaways of 'Boundless' beach

balls. The Alumni Affairs staff noted that they hosted over 55 events this weekend, which also included a name reveal for the new Parkway Boulevard Building—now called Fahy Commons in honor of Gerald P. Fahy '79 and Cathleen A. who donated \$7.5M in 2020, a Polar Bear display case dedication, campus tours and virtual "Classes Without Quizzes" led by current faculty and staff.

"My experience is that in addition to the annual events that are held every year, the creative [Alumni Affairs] team both comes up with interesting programming as well as responds to the needs and interests of alumni," says Jessika Parra '19, the assistant director of Alumni Affairs. This weekend would not have been possible without the work of the Alumni Affairs department and several other organizations on campus. The Office of Alumni Affairs' work extends from Alumni Weekend to events such as Mulementum, Toast Heard Around The World, Scholarship receptions, first year Candle Lighting, Senior Champagne Brunch and more. Next year, class years ending in 3's and 8's will be celebrated on Sept. 8-10. The department's events and programs are always communicated in their biweekly email bulletin and online at [muhlenbergconnect.com/events](http://muhlenbergconnect.com/events).



FROM **DECLINE** PAGE 1

Dents and parents don't view liberal arts colleges as places where opportunities are plentiful. A new focus on branding to attract this competitive pool of high school students and emphasize the College's strengths was highlighted by Falk. She stated, "I think we've got to put a finer point on what our outcomes and our results are. And I think we've got to be willing to communicate that broadly and boldly. One of the things that I love about Muhlenberg as a community, is that there's this humble culture about things. But I think it's okay to be like, we're that good."

Branding may not be the only factor straying away potential students. Prior to room and board, tuition costs come out to \$58,005. This high price tag might serve as an aversion to some potential applicants, especially those that are unaware that Muhlenberg offers 99 percent of first-year students some form of financial aid. When Falk was asked about potentially lowering this sticker price she commented that "I will say, I understand the cost of educating our students is expensive, and there's a reason for that." When The Weekly asked Falk if lowering the sticker price in lieu of giving out less financial aid was a possibility Falk stated

that "I don't know that I can say, personally, a recommendation there. It's not my place to do that."

The Institutional Academic Renewal Task Force includes Coppa as well as several other professors from a variety of different departments. In a joint statement to The Weekly, the task force outlined their purpose saying that they were "formed in May 2022 to make recommendations to President Harring about how to adjust the size of the faculty to reflect the projected smaller student population of Muhlenberg over the next few years." Harring confirmed that changes will be coming in response to the decline in students saying, "The College is beginning a process of assessing our curriculum to ensure that the classes and experiences we provide align with today's students' needs and interests... We anticipate that there will be changes in curriculum and staffing over the next two years. Students will continue to work closely with their advisors to plan a course of study that meets their goals."

Coppa informed The Weekly that the task force's assessment concluded that "the key bit of the task force is essentially we're recommending that we slim down the number of faculty by... not immediately replacing everybody who re-

tires...Which might mean that there's a little bit of intermediate awkwardness."

Coppa emphasized the importance of interdepartmental collaboration and overlay. This was also stressed by Professor of English Jim Bloom, Ph.D., who noted that, "This year's enrollment plummet has become, as it should have, an in-your-face, 'WTF!' moment for faculty who kept clinging to departmentalism. Department boundaries were never set in stone, though generations of professors have come to see them that way." Bloom added, "This mindset led chairs and [department] members to always insist on replacing retirees and often expecting that their successors would teach exactly the same courses the retirees had offered, rather than seeing departures as opportunities to rethink their programs and perhaps even collaborate with other departments and programs and perhaps even lower overall compensation costs."

Some may wonder what the implications of a smaller faculty holds for the future of Muhlenberg. Will class sizes increase with less faculty? Will courses covering entire topics no longer be taught? These questions remain unanswered.

While The Weekly (and even possibly the administration) do not know

what the exact cause, or causes, for this decline in enrollment are, ideas regarding changes that the College can implement to aid this dilemma are always circulating. The Weekly reached out to several tour guides, students who work with potential first-years most directly, to share what prospective students and parents are looking for in a college, and whether they see Muhlenberg as a good fit.

Tori Brady '25 noted that "From personal experience, I make sure to emphasize the importance of the liberal arts here at Muhlenberg and how important theater and the arts are especially because we have the GAR [general academic requirement] for students to take an art class and experience something possibly outside their comfort zones. I have not experienced too much confusion with 'liberal arts school' or the confusion is just not emphasized or asked about."

Anam Ali '25 had a different perspective saying, "I find that a lot of students and parents visiting have the impression that liberal arts schools don't have strong science programs and that they only focus on the humanities. As a science student on the pre-health track myself, I would say that some of our strongest programs are our natural sciences."

FROM **DAY** PAGE 1

being in the single digits in terms of being part of the electorate to being in the double digits." This policy allowed Black Americans to elect their preferred representatives for the first time in a post-Jim Crow South.

The Voting Rights Act also updated regulations for congressional districts, requiring states to draw a certain number of districts with majority minority voters so that they would have a voice in government. Where prior to the Voting Rights Act, states Black voters encountered a number of barriers such as literacy tests and rigged district maps, the new guidelines guaranteed a vote that mattered. However, as Tolson explained in the webinar, those mandates ensuring equal representation and opportunity were hard to enforce and are now under threat.

Tolson explained that "when you say you have a right to vote, it is a right to cast a ballot and have it count, but it is also a right to a vote that is undiluted. When we draw voting districts, it is possible to draw districts in such a way that someone's vote doesn't count. For example, if you make a district 70 percent African American and 30 percent white but the preferred candidate of the African Americans only needs 56 percent of that vote to win, you wasted 14 percent of those votes."

Consolidating minority voters into a few districts such that their sway on the election is diminished is called district-packing. Tolson referenced a current case under review in the Supreme Court where a Florida district had planned to pack its district in violation of the Voting Rights Act. The Court decided to implement a short term freeze until they could revisit the case. However, given the current political demographic of the Supreme Court, future efforts to curb

the effects of district-packing could be in jeopardy. With the midterm elections coming up this November, and the 2024 presidential election just two years away, voter suppression will continue to be a pressing issue, both for politicians and for the Supreme Court.

Despite continued threats to the integrity of American democracy, Tolson believes that students should not be discouraged by the new threats posed to minority voters. "Democracy is always [going to] work in progress, and it may feel discouraging, but the reality is that it has always moved at a slow and steady pace. Prior to the 1960s, most states did not function like a democracy. This is something that we need to fight for, not something that we have to take back. This is not the end; it can be a new beginning."

Ultimately, Tolson says, "Democracy is a choice, and it always has been," and our decision to uphold it or let it fade "begs the question of who do we want to be."

The event was well received by students. Layla Siahatar '25 found the event interesting, saying, "I found the part about gerrymandering particularly fascinating. In a political science class in high school I drew a congressional map of Pennsylvania and I was glad that she talked about voting districts."

Maya Brooks '24 shared those sentiments saying, "Franita Tolson went into depth about the different ways people can be disenfranchised when they vote. She explained the power and undemocratic nature of gerrymandering, where [an] individuals' vote effectively doesn't count, and touched on how America is not a democracy, rather a republic with democratic norms. We have to ask ourselves, do we want to be a republic or a democracy"



PHOTO COURTESY OF USC GOULD SCHOOL OF LAW

Franita Tolson spoke at 'Berg about the constitution and specifically the 1960's voting rights act as it pertains to voter suppression today.

# Midterm Madness

BY KATHERINE CONLON  
CO-NEWS EDITOR

The Muhlenberg Weekly is committed to informing the student body about the upcoming midterm election. In our new column, we will outline key races that 'Berg students can vote in. We have reached out to every candidate for their responses on a couple of critical questions. Below are the responses from the candidates for Pennsylvania's 14th State Senate district:



PHOTO COURTESY OF DEAN BROWNING FOR STATE SENATE

## Candidate Dean Browning

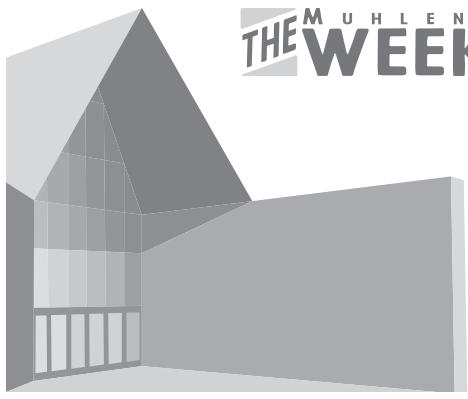
Can you briefly illustrate a couple (2-4) of your key policies or issues that you are planning to focus on if reelected?

"My focus will be to create energy independence and tackle inflation by taking advantage of the natural resources under our feet to make Pennsylvania the world's leading producer of low-cost energy and reduce what it costs to fill up our cars and to heat our homes.

[I also plan on] empowering parents on education and improv[ing] schools by

SEE **MIDTERM** PAGE 7





"The truth is of course is that there is no journey. We are arriving and departing all at the same time."

- David Bowie

## Shining a light on 'Berg Production



The 'Berg Production team is involved in many events on campus.

BY IAN CLARK  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

Muhlenberg is host to a variety of incredible events put on by the countless clubs on campus. With events going on nearly every day, there is never a moment to rest, which rings especially true for 'Berg Production, the student-run production team in charge of managing lights, sound and technology for nearly every event across campus. From a capella or comedy shows to movie nights on the green, a member of the 'Berg Production team can always be seen working hard to get the event looking and sounding great.

Being a member of 'Berg Production is

no easy task. It is a job that requires organization, time management, teamwork and a bit of heavy lifting. 'Berg Production alumni Sam Powers '22 said, "Event work is insane and comes with long hours, but seeing everyone on campus come together was amazing. I got to work with almost every performance ensemble on campus. Seeing everyone put so much work into their performances was motivating to make sure our tech added something extra to what they came in with."

This job also entails usage of audio-visual equipment, something that may seem daunting to those unfamiliar, but manager Jonah Adamcik '19 and the rest of the team are always ready to help and train new members. Ben Goldstone '24 commented that 'Berg Production is "a

collective environment that is not only a business-first group, but also a community that we grow and nurture in." Goldstone brings up a key part of 'Berg Production which is its welcoming community. 'Berg Production is open to anyone with any kind of background in lights and sound because no matter what, there is always room to grow or to be there to help others grow as well. Adamcik elaborates on this, "We hope to be able to not only give students technical skills, but to develop their managerial and entrepreneurial skills running our business and to allow students to explore skill sets that are most interesting to them."

Adamcik was one of the original members of 'Berg Production. In his time as a student at Muhlenberg, he recollects that 'Berg Production "started when I was a student sound-tech for Student Activities [Muhlenberg Activities Council] and noticed that we had all of these student performance groups and organizations, and I noticed that they were extremely professional. Their quality of work was amazing, and I knew then that I wanted to work toward creating an organization with people and equipment that was just as professional as the quality of our student organizations." Adamcik worked with the Student Government Association (SGA) to gain funding to purchase equipment to support his idea, and through collaboration with Rita Chesterton, the director of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Program, 'Berg Production has grown into a full blown production company, with Adamcik hoping in the future "to eventually offer our services off-campus too, giving students access to more work and higher pay-rates."

One of Adamcik's leading efforts in running 'Berg Production is making sure the organization has a lasting positive effect on students even after they graduate Muhlenberg. Adamcik mentioned, "Adam Marcus '22 was able to not only develop his technical skills, but also to develop his accounting and management skills which gave him [the] opportunity to develop those skills outside of the classroom." Powers said, "Working for 'Berg Production was a really great and enriching experience to my theatrical training. Working events means that you are constantly doing something differently. Every event needs different support and presents their own unique challenges. 'Berg Production taught me to always be adaptable. Being able to come up with solutions on the fly has been a marketable skill for me when I was applying for work in theatre post-graduation."

Hannah Cohen '25 describes 'Berg Production as "an experience that helps students make their events great and make turnouts even more amazing." Adamcik recognized this, and made it 'Berg Production's mission to be a part of the campus community, and is eagerly awaiting the future of the organization.

Adamcik closed with, "I am drawn to this work, not only because of the technical work that we do, but because of its impact on the organizations that we support. They are extremely professional vocalists, actors, dancers and artists. Our work exists to enhance their work, and our campus is heavily invested in the arts and it's an honor for us to be as well. We are extremely excited for the future of 'Berg Production and we can't wait to see what the future has in-store for us."

## Evening of Distinction highlights the voices of artists

BY DANNY MILKIS  
CO-ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

Alumni Weekend caught the attention of many who call Muhlenberg their alma mater, including some of the class of 1972, who were celebrating their fifty-year graduation class reunion. Members of the class, along with other invitees from the faculty board, were invited to participate in An Evening of Distinction, which took place in the Baker Center for the Arts on Friday, Sept. 23. There, presenters celebrated the academic achievements of Muhlenberg students and faculty since

the COVID-19 lockdown.

The program in Empie Theatre, which lasted from 8-9 p.m., ushered in a packed house. The content included college-produced videos of students and staff reporting their academic achievements and successes from quarantine. This section was open to all alumni, and a link to watch the livestream was broadcast to the full alumni network.

Alumni performers, such as Evan Plaza '19 and Grace Oddo '22, showcased the success of the arts at Muhlenberg, and crowned the presentation with a number of solo and duet selections from the musical theater canon, which paid homage

to the development and progress of the community as the world opens up, including "A Change in Me" from "Beauty and the Beast," which was performed by Oddo and Plaza.

"It was so awesome to be able to come back and perform at the Evening of Distinction," said Oddo. "All the alumni and folks who were there seemed really receptive to our performance, and we had people coming up to us saying the sweetest things."

Alongside the alumni soloists, Noteworthy, Muhlenberg's Broadway-based a cappella group, was asked to perform a rendition of "I Can See Clearly Now," ac-

companied by chapel organist Drew Lutz-Long on piano and Sam Kaplan '23 on percussion. The arrangement, which parted ways from its initial Caribbean pop-rock tempo, was hopeful and uplifting, and had the audience clapping along to the recognizable '70s tune.

The group had the opportunity to rehearse with Lutz-Long at rehearsal prior to the event, which added to the excitement of singing instrumentally accompanied music, something the group wasn't used to.

"I had a ton of fun performing at the

SEE CLASS PAGE 6



# The show must go on

## *The COVID outbreak on campus didn't stop rehearsals*

BY JOHNNY VEGLIA  
CO-ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

The performance opportunities on campus are dependent on the ability to have artists and creatives present to rehearse and communicate. This has not been the case, however, for numerous shows and opportunities on campus due to a spread of COVID cases and other health-related issues. The disease impacted numerous artistic teams and creatives on the theatre and dance department's production of "The Threepenny Opera," "We Are Proud to Present a Presentation About the Herero of Namibia Formerly Known as Southwest Africa, From the German Südwestafrika, Between the Years 1884-1915," the Muhlenberg Theatre Association's (MTA) Studios productions and more performances.

"We have had some folks who needed to miss rehearsal for health reasons, and of course that presents challenges. We're still moving forward at a good pace, and rehearsals are going very well, so I'm not worried, but it is adding an additional layer of complexity," stated Jim Peck, Ph.D., the director of "The Threepenny Opera."

The show does not open until the end of October so the production team has been able to accommodate missing members of the cast and crew.

Lauren Koranda '23, the associate director for "The Threepenny Opera," stated, "I tested positive after the wave of cases on campus hit our company. Luckily, we had the support of our amazing understudies to carry us through the week of COVID-related absences. Our director and stage management really did work to put safety first and even facilitated the ability for me to be a part of every rehearsal on Zoom from my bed 100 miles away."

Zoom was also used for members of the cast who tested positive for COVID.

"It hasn't really impacted the overall creative experience because I didn't miss much and they were very good about getting me caught up. I am really excited for this show. Everyone is so talented and I am really excited to perform with them,"



stated Kailani Reis '24. Reis utilized the recordings of choreographed numbers to help with not being present.

For another actor, Allison Mintz '23, testing positive took an emotional toll related to her result's potential impact on her peers. Mintz said, "My friends know that I never cry, but when I tested positive despite masking everywhere I went, I was really crying to the poor woman at the health center over the phone. My being upset had literally nothing to do with the illness that had taken over my body and everything to do with the inconvenience it would cause my cast and classmates."

Mintz highlighted, "I was so apologetic to everyone when I communicated that I had COVID, and Jim Peck really put it best when he responded to my email saying, 'this is a disease, not a moral failing.' There was nothing I could do."

The understudies for the piece have also been essential to the process and making sure the show can go on.

"We cast understudies for all of the principal roles and then swings for the understudies. That doesn't usually happen at Muhlenberg, but in light of the fact that COVID isn't over, we thought it would be smart to anticipate this might occur. It has, indeed, been essential. When an actor needs to miss rehearsal due to their health, they can Zoom in if they feel well enough, and hear the discussion and watch their understudy move

through the role to assimilate blocking or other changes. The understudies are working hard and approaching the task with a great generosity of spirit, so they have been a real boon to the production. I'm so grateful to them," stated Peck.

Mintz continued, "I am so lucky to have an incredible understudy, Valentina [Nazzaro '23], who stood in for me and took notes in my absence. I hope the department continues to use understudies in a post-pandemic world, learning to be a good swing/understudy is so valuable and clearly useful in today's theatre world."

"We Are Proud to Present..." opens this weekend, and has faced a couple of health-related issues. Caro Sutton-Schott '24, the production stage manager, had to miss numerous rehearsals. "I think the most difficult part of getting COVID during the process was having to rely on other people to do my job. As a stage manager, I count on being a part of every moment of the process. The 'We Are Proud to Present' rehearsal process was not the type of show where I could Zoom in and completely and fully understand what was happening. Thankfully, I had an amazing [stage management] and directorial team to fill me in on as much information as possible, however even with that, I still struggled a bit when I came back. It was really hard to step away knowing that I was missing vital information in rehearsals."

The dance productions on campus

were also affected by the COVID outbreak, particularly with auditions for the department's production of "In Motion" for the spring. Production Stage Manager Carlie Nieman '23 said, "The unpredictability of COVID on campus definitely had an impact on 'In Motion' auditions whether that was dancers being unable to physically attend auditions or masks being required by choreographers in the audition room. Thankfully, we were able to adapt and give opportunities for all dancers to audition by having a virtual video submission option for those who were in isolation."

The student-run productions of the MTA also started off with a rough start due to the Studios coordinator, Kyle Barkis '25, having the virus, and one of the directors of the three productions having COVID as well. Joey Marcacci '23, the director of "God of Carnage," one of the three Studios shows, had to begin the process in isolation. "I'm directing a Studio production this semester, and I was also lucky that my five day quarantine did not derail much of the schedule. We are now moving along just fine in the process!"

Actors and artists will also have to be kind and understanding of themselves, especially when it comes to an illness that is not within their control.

Mintz declared, "Being cast in a departmental production is an incredible honor, and it immediately becomes a priority of mine to keep my body healthy for the show. This season though, despite all of my efforts, I wasn't in control."

The production process will continue to move forward despite the lingering pandemic, but the artistic and production teams of these shows have to be cautious and understanding.

Koranda finalized, "No one enjoys wearing a mask in rehearsal, but I think we all understand the importance of preventing any further illness and absences as best we can. This is the largest company and longest run of a show Muhlenberg has had since before the pandemic, so anything we can do to keep each other safe and supported through this process is worth doing."

### FROM CLASS PAGE 5

event this weekend," said Julian Goldman-Brown '23, the group's beatboxer. "It was a fun change of pace to do a choral arrangement instead of a capella."

In addition, the gala also brought back a cappella alumni members, who had the opportunity to join the current roster on this unique occasion, as well as various other music performances throughout the duration of the weekend. Noteworthy also had the opportunity to perform at the Homecoming Fair on Saturday at 3 p.m., and will be performing at various

other weekend gigs over the course of the semester.

"Being back with Noteworthy for the alumni performance felt like I was just continuing where I left off," said Jake Watzman '22, who visited campus during Alumni Weekend. "It just felt normal that I was there and my fellow group members seemed to agree. It's never too late to come back and sing again."



Student performers join alumni soloists to celebrate the class of 1972.



# THE WEEKLY WATCH

a film review

## Freak Out in a "Moonage Daydream"

BY IAN CLARK  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

To describe the artist David Bowie would be an impossible feat. The British rock star was an icon that transcended a simple image. Bowie was a kaleidoscopic master of his craft, a chameleon of sound and vision. No two albums of his ever sounded the same and everything he did was dripping with style and extravagance. The idea of trying to capture this incredible being into a single film has been an ongoing question in the onslaught of music biopics like "Bohemian Rhapsody" (2018), "Rocketman" (2019) and "Elvis" (2022). How could one actor or one movie be able to truly capture and preserve Bowie's otherworldliness and legacy? This was the question that director Brett Morgen grappled with through the production of his new film, "Moonage Daydream," a documentary (in the lightest of terms) that captures Bowie's essence in a two-hour-and-fourteen-minute cacophony of vibrance, noise and beauty.

Morgen is no stranger to encapsulating the vibe of an icon within a documentary. His previous works include, "Cobain: Montage of Heck" (2015) about Kurt Cobain, "Jane" (2017) about Jane Goodall, and "The Kid Stays In The Picture" (2002) about Robert Evans to name a few. Every documentary focused on a specific figure while staying true to their image and what made them special in the first place. "Moonage Daydream" does not break this mold, in fact, it furthers it to a greater extent. Morgen was granted permission by Bowie himself, prior to the artist's untimely passing in 2016, to direct this film. Allowing access to the archive

of Bowie's music and clips of his concerts, interviews and more puts this film ahead of another film about Bowie, "Stardust" (2020), which was made without the permission of Bowie's estate, preventing it from using his songs and aiding in the negative backlash against the poorly made biopic.

Rather than a typical documentary, using the 'talking heads' interview style, "Moonage Daydream" uses Bowie's voice to talk, or sing, for himself rather than others speaking for him. This adds to the overall feel of the film, pushing it far beyond a typical documentary and making it an experience that cannot be replicated, much like Bowie's image itself.

As a viewer, I found myself in complete awe throughout the entire runtime of "Moonage Daydream." I chose to see this film in an IMAX theatre, and I cannot imagine viewing this any other way. The colors were vibrant and energetic. I could feel the near deafening sound in every inch of my body. What I love about the story this film portrays is that it doesn't try to condense Bowie's entire life into its runtime, nor is it even concerned with Bowie's life. "Moonage Daydream" is a portrait of the artist David Bowie through and through, showcasing his music, eccentricity, costumes and more instead of detailing the personal life and history of Bowie as a person, which may be a damper for some but not for me.

As said previously, this was no simple documentary but instead a truly theatrical and visceral experience that revolutionizes the way stories of musical artists are told. If you have the chance, I cannot recommend watching "Moonage Daydream" in theatres enough.



## beauty tips

to feel and look good

BY VALERIE KUSNER  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As Gen Z-ers, it's hard not to get discouraged when we live in a society where we are so fixated on our appearance. For some people, looking put together all the time is a full-time job, but it doesn't have to be. Instead of wasting time and energy on thinking about what needs to be fixed and changed, shift your focus to the importance of maintaining our natural beauty.

Here are some beauty tips to help you feel and look good while being a college student.

### It begins with your skin.

Let's face it, there is no makeup product that will completely conceal bad skin. Of course, moisturizers and scrubs tend to help a little bit, but the biggest key to getting clearer skin starts with diet. Drinking a lot of water and eating foods that have rich nutrients will help keep your skin glowing and make you feel good too. Throughout the day, try to avoid touching your face and popping pimples, this only causes unwanted irritation. Using gentle products and washing your face after you sweat are also ways to get on the right track so you can continue to enjoy life and keep your skin happy.

### Stop washing your hair every day.

Everyone strives to get that flawless voluminous hair that we always see on celebrities and in hair commercials. Using very few hair products is a step in the right direction of getting that luscious hair you've always wanted. Over washing your hair can strip the natural oils and actually make it look dull, greasy and flat. If you feel uneasy about leaving your hair unwashed, use dry shampoo on your scalp and put it in a bun to get it out of the way; this will also help lessen the chance of the oil in your hair from getting on your face and causing it to break out.

### Keep your makeup simple.

Living in a small environment is already tough, don't overcrowd your space with a ton of makeup you don't need. Keep it simple for everyday use, but don't be afraid to spice it up once in a while, especially on the weekends when you need a little change. Before you go out, leave your makeup remover wipes on your bed so you don't forget to take off all your makeup before you go to sleep.

Knowing you look good will help make you feel confident when you walk out the door.

### FROM **MIDTERM** PAGE 4

giving parents the ability and means to make a choice that is best for their child; and require online transparency so they can see the curriculum used to instruct their kids... School choice cannot be for elite, wealthy families who can send their kids to private school. It cannot be for those that have the means to move out of Allentown and other failing school districts. It is not simply a question of funding. In Allentown there have been repeated tax increases and millions from the state that have done nothing more than produce worse and worse results."

How do you think your potential re-election could benefit college students,

specifically those at Muhlenberg?

Browning did not answer this question.

### Candidate Nick Miller

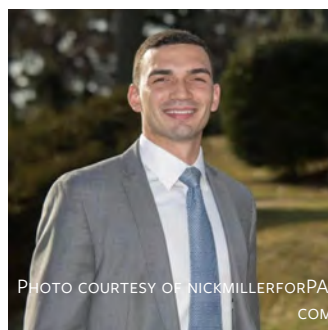


PHOTO COURTESY OF NICKMILLERFORPA.COM

Can you briefly illustrate a couple (2-4) of your key policies or issues that you are planning to focus on if reelected?

"My top priority is education and fair funding for our schools in the Commonwealth, and ensuring that students have access to high quality education regardless of their background. Other issues I am passionate about are infrastructure and the economy in Pennsylvania. I also plan to protect a woman's right to choose, because the government should not interfere with this personal freedom."

How do you think your potential re-election could benefit college students, specifically those at Muhlenberg?

"As a young person myself, I am acutely aware of issues facing college students, such as food and housing insecurity and the importance of quality education for people of all ages. Community safety is also a top priority of mine, and ensuring that students feel safe as members of the Lehigh Valley community. I hope to fight directly for these issues with my colleagues in Harrisburg when I am elected."





## Paige's Page

BY PAIGE WEISBURG  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Hey besties! Welcome to this week's edition of Paige's Page. This week has brought a lot of ups and downs for me personally, but I think that's because we are now entering libra season and that is the name of their game. This week it looks like you are all feeling a bit introspective. Maybe it's the alumni coming back that has made you think that your life might end when we walk out of the red doors of this fine institution, or the premature burnout before we all come back to life just before fall break. And with that let's go!

**Q** Hi, Paige! I'm a freshman and I was wondering if you had any advice on how I could make the most of my college experience.

Hey bestie! Welcome to Muhlenberg! This is a really tough question to answer because being here looks so different for everyone. Because a global pandemic took a lot of time from my real college experience, I think that you have a lot more to do than I ever could have. There are so many ways I could go about answering this question because I feel as though I have lived so many lives here.

Okay, here are my tips for you, enjoy!

1. Try everything! Right now going to introductory club meetings, random freshmen events or hall events can feel overwhelming and some of you may think you're too cool for that, but I promise you, you're not. You never know where you can find some of your favorite people and they may be in the places you least expect.
2. Don't over commit yourself too soon. I came on campus and I joined like three clubs (that I would go to regularly) and it was the best choice I made because I knew I needed to adjust and that overextending myself so early on was going to be something that made me repress my feelings and not allow me to learn who I am in this space.
3. The hall bathroom is the hottest club in town. Literally talk to everyone. Your neighbors can be your built-in best friends and besides, they will probably see you at your worst so at the very least, be nice.
4. Do things that take you out of your comfort zone and challenge you to be a better version of yourself. I waited until this semester to do this, and sometimes it's nice to be the worst in the room at something because it can help you grow, not just as a student, but in all aspects of your life.
5. Find a space that you consider your second home, a place where you can go to just relax and be free when you want to be alone in a place other than your dorm room. There are a million on this campus, finding yours may take time but there is one for you.
6. Stop caring. What other people think of you or the things you do is none of your concern. The second you lose interest in what other people think about you, you will feel infinitely better about any decisions you make.

**Q** Hi Paige, like you I am a very confident person, but I feel like a lot of the time this is used against me when I don't feel my best. Does this happen to you and how do you get past it without holding a grudge on your less secure friends?

Hey bestie, I really do understand what you mean. Unfortunately, it is something that happens to come with being perceived as a confident person. When people feel insecure or upset they crave validation. And you, as a confident person, are able to validate yourself in a lot of ways. However, as you and I both know, it's not that simple. We need validation from others sometimes too. The way you feel is always valid, even if the people you confide in don't see it that way. Everyone goes through things, and while you are perceived as being well equipped to handle really hard things on your own, like brushing off harsh words, or a rejection or an incident that made you feel badly, it's okay to want help. It's okay to ask your friends to listen to you and validate you. If they don't, you do not owe them the validation they feel that they need. Weaponizing another person's confidence as a way for someone, likely an insecure person, to bring themselves up is really gross. It can be hard to not hold things like that against them, so telling them or setting boundaries yourself can be really productive. Asking for space and time to process your own feelings can also help because we all need to get over this hump eventually, if you can't trust them to help you and you need to do it alone, they can not stop you from taking that time. Your confidence is something they wish they had, because they think it would fix every problem. It's not your fault that they're wrong.

**Q** Hey Paige! This semester has not gone anything at all like I wanted or planned for it to. How do I stop myself from being disappointed about being here?

Hi bestie, I'm sorry that things aren't going how you want them to. Unfortunately you can't control everything, even though you really, really, really want to. If you had asked me this question anytime before this semester, I would have said, 'it's okay you still have time,' or 'there's always next semester.' Unfortunately for me, that is not the case. If that applies to you, take it with you on your journey. Take control in ways that you can, initiate plans, create time for yourself, spend time with people that ground you and bring you back on track. If you're like me and you don't have another semester, write your story yourself. Do anything you want because the worst thing that can happen is that you have to deal with minor consequences for a number of weeks which I refuse to acknowledge for my own mental health. Cancel the plans you made in your head of how things were supposed to be. Start over.

Keep your eye out for Paige's Page Live, date and location coming soon!

You can submit questions to <https://tinyurl.com/paigespagequestion>. It will also be linked in my Instagram bio— @paigeweisburg and in The Muhlenberg Weekly Instagram Linktree.

## Mum's The Word

BY ROWAN JOYCE  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

### TW: eating disorder

*I hope I'm in your dreams the way you are in all of mine. You've got a love so fine I wish that I could make you mine.*

Sierra Ferrell's dreamy lyrics cut through the damp air with a rosy twang, pulling my attention away from the adhesive stencil applied to my skin. I recognize this song from Spotify because I, like many of my friends, idolize my "Discover Weekly" playlist. The melody matches the tone of the room I am in. The wood is dark and worn, little scratches from little paws adorn the misshapen floorboards. Doodles and black ink sketches fill in the gaps where the sun-spotted tapestries don't reach. Every inch of the cabin is decorated with a natural artistic eye. Even the windowsill I am facing is covered with dried flowers, carved animal bones and the pages of some forgotten poem. Outside, the late summer rain drums a soothing beat on the leaves of an ancient oak tree.

My skin tingles with anticipation. My idea is six months in the making, culminating in a tattoo session with a woodland artist named Bobby. The stencil peels off

to reveal a purple rendering of a chrysanthemum just below my inner arm crease. Equal parts nervous and mesmerized, I let out a gasp. This gasp quickly turns into wheezes of pain, because as it turns out, I have a remarkably low pain tolerance AND an aversion to pointy objects. Nevertheless, nearly two hours later, I am left with the most beautiful symbol of resilience I could ever dream of.

One flower, one leaf and one stem curling to create the National Eating Disorder Awareness symbol. It's a subtle image, but it's enough for me. Chrysanthemums are my favorite flower because they symbolize the transition between summer and autumn. Generally, they are seen as symbols of friendship, longevity and optimism. To me, they mean recovery. I have been in recovery for an eating disorder since December 2021. Anorexia has taken chunks of joy out of my life that I sometimes wonder if I will ever get back. Everyday I arm myself to choose recovery. Now I have an image on my left forearm to ground me.

The tattoo stings on my skin. Fresh shiny ink winking up at me. A thin layer

of neosporin coats the needle pricks like glaze on new oil painting. I'm a miniature gallery. I love what the needles left behind. A reminder to myself that I deserve recovery. I deserve a body that will carry me through the twists and turns of life without giving up. I deserve a space to grow out of soil and blossom. To reach tall and unfurl my petals. To live like this chrysanthemum.



Rowan Joyce '24 shows off her meaningful chrysanthemum tattoo.

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor ([bergweeklyoped@gmail.com](mailto:bergweeklyoped@gmail.com)) or the Editor-in-Chief ([weeklyeditor@gmail.com](mailto:weeklyeditor@gmail.com)) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.





# Listen Loudly

...



A creative space for marginalized voices

## magic goblin saga part 2//

BY DES SUAREZ  
STAFF WRITER

part 2//

the best times of my life are also the worst

i am bleeding all the time

i feel an ache in my chest as i stare at someone i adore, who i have a sinking feeling  
does not adore me in the same way,  
ive been basking in the warmth, the comfort of their touch, that isnt a touch reserved  
for me and me alone  
ive been loud inside my head, voices scrambling, leaving me no time to hold onto the  
good,  
because i dont know whats good, i just hold onto things hoping one day ill know but i  
dont,  
i never know so i just keep holding and holding and holding and holding and holding  
on  
and the things want me to let go, but i can't tell if its the thing telling me to let go or  
the thwarting of words inside my head that are yelling. and hurting, and weeping, and  
digging and digging and digging and digging into my skin down to my bones, ripping  
out my teeth

the things and the voices and the thoughts are eating me alive

i am bleeding all the time

theres magic in the fact that i am still standing  
that the structure of my body still holds even though the goblin in my skull is like a  
termite  
that eats and eats and eats and eats the good if it ever existed behind my eyes  
a magic goblin is stealing my teeth, one by one, the healthiest, brightest ones,  
leaving rotten decayed, chipped, frayed pieces of bone in their wake, each piece  
claws into the roof of my mouth, my tongue, my gums,

i am bleeding all the time

i am constantly choked by the blood from my own body, ive  
tasted it and breathed it and breathed it and breathed it for so long i  
dont even remember its there until i open my mouth to  
try and speak, to tell anyone that  
someone is stealing my teeth  
but i have to stop  
the blood from  
draining my  
body and  
the magic  
goblin is  
me



PHOTO COURTESY OF DES SUAREZ

## Asexuality

BY KEANNA PEÑA  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Picture this: you're kissing someone. Their lips are moving against yours and you feel  
nothing, nothing, nothing.

Actually, I'm lying. You feel stupid, you feel like you are doing something wrong even  
though physical evidence is showing you that you are not doing anything wrong. But  
it feels wrong, because kissing feels like nothing and shouldn't it feel like something?  
This person you are kissing is your significant other and you've read books and have  
seen movies where the main character needs to kiss their partner. They ache for it.  
They can't keep their hands off of them. Your partner can't keep their hands off of  
you and you feel like you should want it. You want to want it. But you feel nothing.  
You feel lips against yours.

Because of this, you reevaluate your life. You think about a time where you've wanted  
to kiss someone, hook up with someone, have sex with someone. You come up blank.  
This doesn't scare you, because, who wants to do that? Turns out, a lot of people do.  
But not you. You go on the internet and read the term asexuality: a person who does  
not feel sexual attraction. What the hell is sexual attraction? What does that feel  
like, to see a person, even a stranger, and think, "I want to kiss you"? Is that real? Do  
people really do that? You ask your roommate and they say yes. Yes? Yes.

Later, you tell your partner about this label that seems to fit just right. Asexual-  
ity. They nod their head, they say they believe you, and then they kiss you. You are  
confused. You don't know how to be asexual and in a relationship. Your partner asks,  
how can I please you? and you say, I don't know. You want to feel "turned on." You  
try so, so hard. And you want to want to please your partner, but you don't know how  
to want that either. Your partner kisses you and you shut down. You feel lips against  
yours. You feel nothing, nothing, nothing.

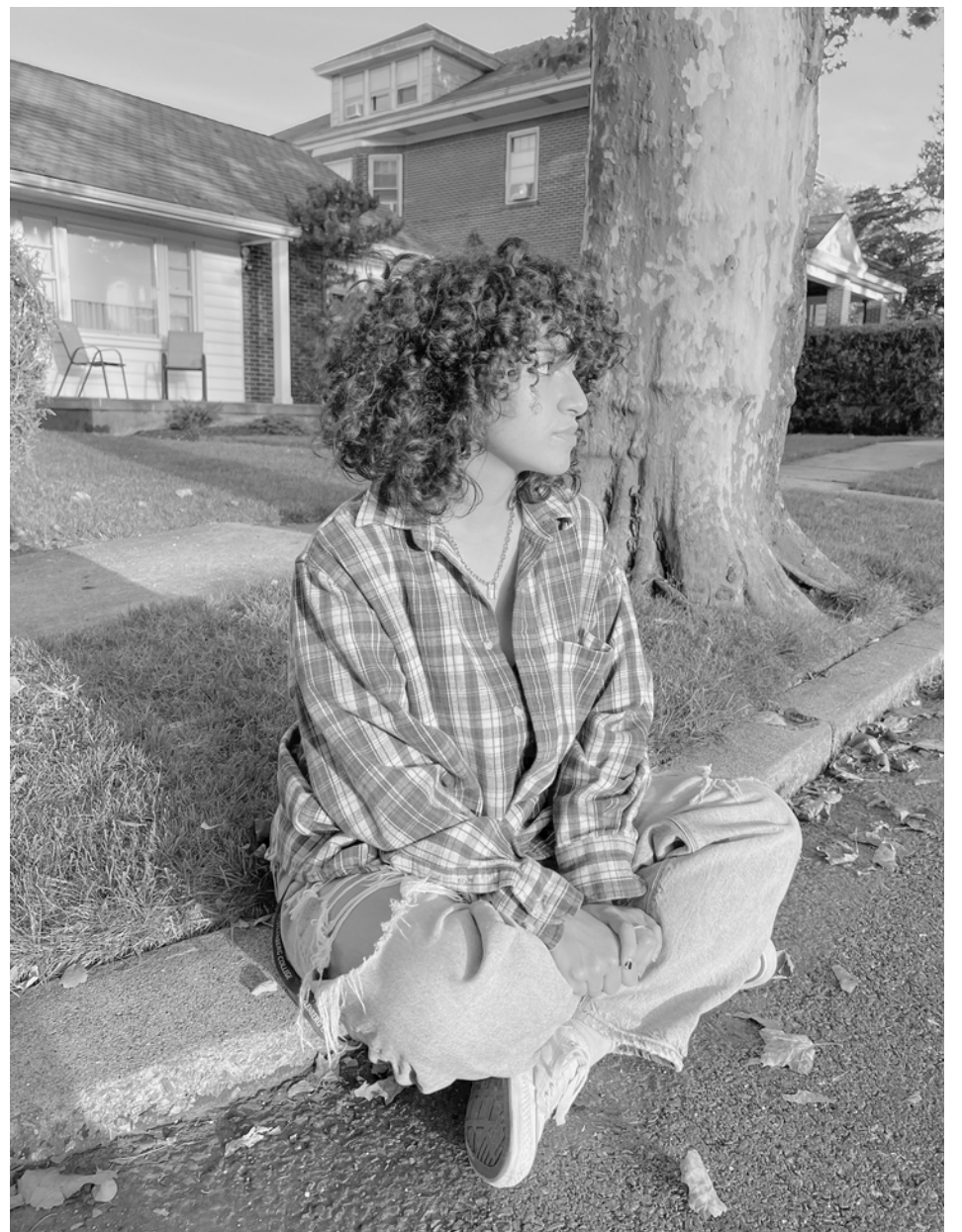


PHOTO COURTESY OF KEANNA PEÑA



# Women's golf tees off the fall season

## *The Mules start the season off at the Gettysburg Invitational*

BY LEXI SIPOS  
ROOKIE WRITER

With the fall season underway, the Muhlenberg women's golf team participated in the Gettysburg Fall Invitational. On Sunday, Sept. 25, the Invitational hosted schools that included Thomas Jefferson University, Arcadia University, McDaniel College, Shenandoah University and more. Muhlenberg has been striving for success since the summer, and when all the players got to campus, they put the work in. According to Shaena Brusey '23, "Everyone on our team has really taken an initiative to show up to practice and put the work in." From practice on the range and playing the course, the Muhlenberg women's golf team has been vigorously preparing for their fall season.

Amidst the training, the players are using the momentum that they created last season to propel them into this invitational. Brusey commented that the 2021 season "ended on a good note and they played some of their best rounds of golf." Last year, at the Gettysburg Invitational, Muhlenberg placed third of five teams involved. With confidence on the green, they have a positive team dynamic to lean on. Despite golf being an individual sport, each player aims to be a supportive team-

mate and outlet in the face of adversity. Most of all, with a variety of class years, the women's team has an encouraging atmosphere with upperclassmen experience.

Unfortunately, Muhlenberg was unable to improve on last year's standing and finished in last place in the invitational. However, Brusey tied for 21st out of 36th, shooting 27 over par and Kaylin Foss tied for 24th shooting 28 over par. Despite the result, the team followed their game plan. Brusey stated, "It is our first tournament back and even some players' first tournament overall, so it is definitely a mix of excitement and nerves. I think going into Sunday, we are really focused on just doing our personal best with where we are at right now." All in all, the team is determined to excel this season.

A point worth recognizing is that this season there are three seniors, Brusey, Sarah Gwiazda '23 and Nya Johnson '23. Brusey wrote, "I definitely think we ended knowing what we needed to work on, but also being hopeful of our performance this season." Mainly, it is an exciting but bittersweet time for the team as they approach their last season.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SHAENA BRUSEY '23

Shaena Brusey '23 putting on the green.

The women continue to push forward within their season. Their next invitational will be at the Golden Oaks Golf Club on Sept. 30.

## 22 sports, one team II

### *Student-athletes take charge of MALT*

BY LIAM AMORUSO  
ROOKIE WRITER

Muhlenberg Athletic Leadership Team (MALT) was created four years ago to encourage student athletes to attend each other's games and do community service. Within the first year of MALT, there was a shift in executive power from the coaches' to student-athletes. This change in leadership made communication a lot smoother between MALT and other student-athletes, which helped MALT quickly grow.

"Go downstairs in Seegers [Union] and on the stairs, look at all the flyers on the wall. How do you get your event to stand out unless it is for a small and specialized group?" asked Sarah Leavenworth, head softball coach and advisor for MALT.

After about six months of student-athlete leadership, Leavenworth joined as the advisor and leader for the club. While students-athletes continued to play a huge role in the process of planning events as well as coming up with ideas, Leavenworth had a wider range of people that she was able to reach out to; however, "Everyone's schedule is chaotic," said Leavenworth. "The turf is full from 4-10 p.m. so if I want to meet with all the athletes, I am going to miss somebody. And then in the middle of the day you have to

work around class schedules." And since athletes comprise only 28 percent of the Muhlenberg student population, MALT has a limited pool of students to recruit from."

However, when everyone was sent home due to the COVID-19 pandemic and most clubs had to shut down or pause—MALT grew bigger than ever.

When students returned to campus, many were hesitant to volunteer. There were fears of events getting canceled and an overall fear of getting sick. This made it significantly harder for Leavenworth and other MALT representatives to hold events.

"During COVID, it was actually easier to get people involved because everyone was stuck at home and everything was online," Leavenworth explained. "Things were just weird when we came back, not knowing what was going to be normal."

More recently, MALT has been holding events with the local community like a Special Olympics and DIII week, as well as helping other student-athlete organizations like 'Head in the Game.' The community outreach is continuing to grow and the Muhlenberg athletic community is growing each year.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MALT INSTAGRAM

Muhlenberg student-athletes playing in the D3 week dodgeball tournament.



# Life-changing opportunity

## *Tony Merchlinsky '24 is the match.*

BY MICHAEL POWEL  
ROOKIE WRITER



PHOTO COURTESY OF TONY MERCHLINSKY '24

Tony Merchlinsky '24 sitting in his hospital bed post-procedure.

**"All I was told was that they were an adult male from Canada who I was a match with and I had the potential to help them," said Merchlinsky. That's all Merchlinsky needed to know."**

Tony Merchlinsky '24 was out for two months of football his freshman year, but not for an injury. It was for something much bigger.

During his first year on the team he received a call from Apheresis Associates in Virginia, just two months after swabbing his cheek to be a possible match with someone for a bone marrow donation. They called him with the news that he was a match and was set to donate bone marrow to a patient with life-threatening cancer.

"I didn't know the person. All I was told was that they were an adult male from Canada who I was a match with and I had the potential to help them," said Merchlinsky. That's all Merchlinsky needed

to know. "The process was very simple as they guided me through everything and made the trip to Canada very easy. In June 2021, I went through with the procedure and donated, and I am grateful to have had that opportunity."

Merchlinsky said this experience made him very happy and will be something he is forever grateful for. "Donating my stem cells for this person is one of the things I'm most proud of in my life. It was the easiest and most painless experience I could go through that resulted in giving another person a second chance at life." He recommends that everybody join the registry for 'Be the Match,' an organization operated by the National Bone Marrow Program.

Be the Match is an organization that works to help people with life-threatening blood cancers such as leukemia and lymphoma. The football team holds an annual event with 'Be The Match' on campus, encouraging students and faculty to join the registry. The event has been a staple ever since the passing of former football Head Coach Mike Donnelly who passed away from a short battle with leukemia in 2017. The event consists of student and adult volunteers around campus, swabbing their mouths to be sent to a lab to see if they are a match with someone who is terminally ill with blood cancer.

Merchlinsky is hoping to spend more time on the field this year after suffering a torn ACL during the team's first scrimmage last year.

# Charismatic Karm

## *The walkoff story*

BY DANIELLE ROBAN  
ROOKIE WRITER

Hitting a walk-off is rare, let alone a walk-off to win a championship. Sarah Karmazyn '22 was the hero of the Muhlenberg softball team's playoff success. She hit the walk-off homerun to win the Centennial Conference Championship against Swarthmore College and move on to the DIII NCAA regional tournament.

When reminiscing on her 2021 playoff run, Karmazyn said, "It was truly a remarkable and unforgettable moment. I still sometimes refuse to believe it was real. We had worked so hard as a team the entire season and to finally make it to the Conference Championships with the end of our [Class of 2022] careers on the line, we knew losing was not an option. We played two very long and hard fought games that day, and after seeing the ball go over the fence, a wave of emotions went through my body, mostly of joy and relief that the game was over. I don't remember running around the bases until rounding third and seeing the team waiting at home plate; it is a core memory I would never trade for the world and will never forget."

Karmazyn put up big numbers all season as the lead-off hitter for the Mules, with a .303 batting average, 44 hits and 18 runs batted in. However, she isn't only amazing at what she does on the field, she is very motivated off the field as well. Af-

ter graduation, Sarah used her accounting major to start a career in internal audit and study for the CPA exam.

Karmazyn has had a huge role in turning the softball program into a championship program. There isn't much comparison between Karmazyn's first-year campaign, which saw Muhlenberg softball earn an abysmal (3-13) Centennial Conference record, and her senior year. "From freshman year to senior year, the Muhlenberg softball program did a [full] 180, and a lot of this is because of Coach Maul [Sarah Leavenworth]. I have never felt so bonded to a group of girls on a team before. Coach Maul helped us develop our team goals, our individual mindsets and our Muhlenberg softball reputation."

Leavenworth instilled trust and a championship mindset within the program which was ultimately the reason for the team's successes. Karmazyn has left an enormous legacy at this program that the softball team will continue to build on year after year.

Karmazyn's biggest advice to the current team is "Trust one another... No matter if you are a senior or if you are a freshman, trust is what builds a team and is the underlying theme for success," says Karmazyn. "When you have trust in each other as teammates, on and off the field, it builds confidence not only for the team, but for each athlete individually."



PHOTO COURTESY OF SARAH KARMAZYN '22

Sarah Karmazyn '22 concentrates on throwing a runner out at first base from the hot corner after a hard ground ball was hit to her



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## Swim into the semester

### Club swim makes it return to the LSC

By JOSH BOTEL  
STAFF WRITER

The intramural swim team has made its return to Muhlenberg after a long hiatus spearheaded by two students, Noah Rones '26 and Elizabeth Abrams '26. There has not been a swim club or intramural team since 2016.

“Over the summer, Noah and I connected over our shared interest in forming some sort of structured swim routine,” said Abrams. “After that, we worked together to reach out to Coach Brad Hackett to get our idea up and running.” Hackett is the head coach of the cross-country and track teams and the director of intramural sports at Muhlenberg. He is the person to contact if you want to start or have any questions about starting an intramural team or sports club. “There has been a swim club, much like ours, in the past, so we knew there would be interest, and Coach Hackett was very eager to help us get started. After that, we set up meetings to put together all of the materials we needed to create the club and get a table at the club fair!”

“The majority of the activities within the recreation program are student driven,” said Hackett. “If we have students who request a particular activity, we try as best we can to create an environment that will enable this activity to grow. I had two freshmen contact me over the summer expressing an interest in getting the swimming group back up and active—therefore we are making an effort to get this activity back up and running.”

“I think the most intimidating part for me was just that I had never founded a club in high school, so all the steps we had to take were new to me,” Abrams comments. “It ended up being a great experience, though. Muhlenberg has a lot of resources that can help even a couple freshmen to start something up.”

“I have been swimming ever since I was four years old,” said Abrams. “I started in lessons and then got a bit more serious and joined a local swim club and competed. I also was co-captain of the junior varsity swim team at my high school for two years. I have never been all that fast, so I knew I wanted a club that would pro-



PHOTO BY JOSH BOTEL '25

Noah Rones '26 practicing his strokes during swim club

vide the space for personal improvement without too much pressure.”

For now, the intramural swim team is not competing against other schools. The purpose of the club is meant for anybody who wants to go and improve their swimming skills. “We are staying as a club focused on personal improvement without any intention to compete. If club members express an interest in competing, we may have to consider it, but for now we’re happy to be a safe space to swim and grow as swimmers,” Abrams commented.

“Before each practice, Noah and I craft a workout made up of different strokes of different distances along with drills,” said Abrams. “Right now, we’ve been trying to set one focus for each practice, so, for example, we had one night where we focused on backstroke technique.”

There are some limitations—the pool’s hours are restricted to the hours the school can staff lifeguards. The 25 meter pool is also not shown on tours and is not advertised much by the school.

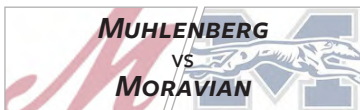
“When we started the club, we were of-

fered the ability to choose times that already had scheduled lifeguards and reserve them for only the club, but we decided to hold the club during regular open swim time instead,” said Abrams. “We knew that the club would likely start small and would not interfere too much with people at the pool for open swim. Depending on attendance, there may be a point where we’ll need to shift to reserving pool time.”

The club meets every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 8-10 p.m.

Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Sept. 29 - Oct. 5

#### Men's Tennis



Thurs, Sept. 29 @ 4:00 p.m.  
Kern Field Courts

#### Women's Tennis



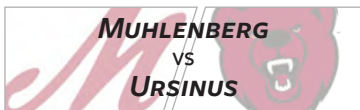
Fri, Sept. 30 @ 3:30 p.m.  
Kern Field Courts

#### Men's Soccer



Sat, Oct. 1 @ 4:00 p.m.  
Varsity Field

#### Volleyball



Wed, Oct. 5 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Memorial Hall



Register to  
vote by  
Oct. 24!



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## NEWS

Mildew in dorms? Accusations abound...

read more on page 3



## ARTS & CULTURE

"Super seniors" talk about their art on campus.

read more on page 5



## OP/ED

Examining the toxicity of fandoms.

read more on page 8



## SPORTS

'Berg club focuses on student athlete mental health.

read more on page 10



# Cast and crew reflect on "We Are Proud to Present..."



PHOTO BY SAM COHEN '26

Read more on page 5

# 'Berg hosts a land acknowledgment discussion

BY SHAIYAN FEISAL  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Muhlenberg held a land acknowledgement discussion on Oct. 7 in the Seegers Union Event Space. Faculty, staff and students had the opportunity to hear about indigenous displacement and the role of land acknowledgements with representatives from Delaware Nation. The three speakers were Katelyn Lucas, Daniel Strongwalker Thomas and Logan Johnson. These speakers use the terms Delaware and Lenape interchangeably. They use the term representative to refer to someone who is part of an indigenous tribe. Representative Thomas' parents were chiefs and played a large community service role. Representative Johnson is a travel citizen of Delaware/Lenape nation. Lucas is a Delaware Nation Historic Preservation Assistant who works at the Museum of Indian Culture in Allentown. This land acknowledgement was put together by Anthropology Department Chair Ben Carter, Ph.D, Assistant Professor of History Jacqueline Antonovich, Ph.D, and students Danielle Siteman '23 and Aya Kanan '23.

During the discussion, Lucas stated that "Land acknowledgments exist in a variety of for-



Delaware Nation Barton Cartwright and Allentown Mayor Matt Tuerk at the inaugural raising of the Delaware Nation flag over Allentown.

mats. Each tribe has different formats. They can be formal statements given before a public event, sometimes in written forms, but they all should acknowledge and respect the land we're standing on. [Land acknowledgments] should prioritize the living relationship between their [Native Americans] homelands and their ancestors." In addition, Lucas pointed out that "Land acknowledgments should not be purely historical, and it should acknowledge that settler displacement is ongoing. Federal tribal nations should try

to maintain their relationships with their homelands." Lucas also explained that Muhlenberg students are currently living on Lenapehoking, which is translated to "homelands of the Lenape." Lucas ended her portion of the discussion by highlighting that Delaware Nation is a federally recognized nation and that Delaware nation does not recognize non-federally recognized groups as issues of citizenship and sovereignty.

Thomas talked about how the Lenape people were forcibly removed from Lenapehoking

and currently live in Oklahoma. Thomas said that "[I] came back on behalf of my nation. There was a community process and I needed to work hard to get an audience in this area." He also said that he was "grateful for Allentown's mayor to allow representatives from Delaware Nation to come back to Lenapehoking for a land acknowledgment discussion." Thomas stressed that "for the last three generations we have looked back and dared to dream to come back to [our] homelands."

Thomas also called attention to the fact that indigenous displacement "is not a race or color issue, being a Native American is not a race. American Indian is not a race. My citizen status is Lenape, it comes from my political recognition through my sovereign nation." Johnson agreed with Thomas's points and addressed the audience by asking: "What can land acknowledgments do from here to be effective? What am I learning historically and culturally from your own community's culture? What are you doing to help your community at large?"

Siteman said, "Back in the summer of 2021, I started doing research with doctors Carter and Antonovich to start the process

SEE LAND PAGE 4



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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The Muhlenberg Weekly strives for accuracy in reporting and writing, but we acknowledge that mistakes happen. Readers are invited to submit corrections about errors in articles, and they should be submitted to weeklyeditor@gmail.com. Corrections are also brought to our staff's attention by our own editors and writers. Our staff will review the suggested correction, consult with the author of the article, and issue the appropriate correction. Online corrections are located at the bottom of the article. Print corrections are located within the paper, on the page indicated in the online edition. However, The Weekly does not grant take-down requests for articles.

## ADVERTISING POLICY

We request that advertising material be submitted by the Monday preceding publication at 5 p.m. If materials have not been received at that time, the advertisement will not run and the advertiser is still responsible for 100% payment. We reserve the right to decline any advertisement that is misleading, inaccurate, fraudulent, or deemed generally unacceptable. This determination will be made by the Business Staff in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief. The Muhlenberg Weekly maintains a distinction between its news & editorial content and advertising. As such, advertisements will not be accepted if they imitate the general style of The Weekly, intentionally or unintentionally. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: headlines, bylines, fonts, and column-arrangements. In order to make this distinction, The Weekly also reserves the right to include the word "advertisement" on any advertisement that is deemed too native.

# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

09/26/2022 Prosser Hall: report to locate student, contact made, no further incident.	Liberty Street: Report of fire alarm from burnt food, system silenced and reset.
09/27/2022 Prosser Hall: Report to transport student to hospital, Campus Safety Officer transported student. Seegers Union: Report of graffiti on bathroom wall, Plant Operations notified to remove. Prosser Lot: Report of hit and run to vehicle causing minor paint damage, investigation to continue. 26th & Chew Streets: Report of motor vehicle accident causing minor damage to bumper, individuals exchanged information, no further incident.	10/02/2022 Leh Street: Report of noise complaint, upon arrival residents spoken to, Disruptive Conduct Report to be issued by the College. The Village: Report of intoxicated student, student transported to hospital by Campus Safety Officer. Seegers Union: Report of found necklace, unknown to whom item belongs, necklace placed in lost and found property.
09/28/2022 N. 22nd Street: Point of information report, individuals spoken to, Housing and Residence Life notified, no further incident.	10/06/2022 Liberty Street: Report of fire alarm from steam from shower, system silenced and reset. Trexler Library: Report of found phone, owner later claimed item. N. 23rd Street: Report of motor vehicle accident causing damage to right side rear door, individuals exchanged information, no further incident.
09/30/2022 M.I.L.E. House: Report of fire alarm, upon arrival no cause could be found, system silenced and reset.	Prosser Hall: Report of possession of drug paraphernalia, individuals identified and spoken to, items placed in evidence locker. Chew Street: Report of fire alarm from cooking, system silenced and reset.
10/01/2022 Brown Hall: Report of broken heater, Housing and Residence Life notified, no further incident. South Hall: Report of unauthorized individual, individual identified and spoken to, Housing and Residence Life notified, no further incident. Walz Hall: Report of alcohol violation, student transported to hospital by Campus Safety Officer.	

# Build Your Own Beverage Pack at the GQ!

Select your 6 favorite beverages for a discounted rate at the General's Quarters. Choose from the soda, water & gatorade pack OR upgrade to the Starbucks & energy drink pack!



**Muhlenberg College Dining**



# An artistic debut at Jay's Local

BY SINHAYANA SRINIVASAN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Jay's Local is a popular hang out and dining spot for Muhlenberg students. Tucked away on the corner of 2310 Liberty Street, it is an accessible cafe. Hardly a three minute walk from Seegers Union, it is a favorite among many Mules. Most speak of it fondly, and some have even commented on the different aspects of the cafe they like. Danna Berro '26, an Allentown resident, spoke fondly of it, saying "Jay's Local is one of my favorite spots for a quick bite in between classes!"

Emma Drake '26, who recently went to visit Jay's, commented that, "The atmosphere was nice and the food was a good break from the dining hall!"

This fall, Jay's Local has come up with a brand new idea to lighten up the streets of Allentown. Over the summer, they realized that the wall on the side of their restaurant was just screaming for attention, so they converted the concrete wall

into a canvas for a mural. The multitude of colors used contrasts beautifully with the plain gray background.

Having been part of the neighborhood for a long time, Jay's Local has always felt a connection with the community, and decided that having a huge painting would not only brighten an individual's day, but also add something unique and memorable. Lyell Scherline, the owner and operator of Jay's Local, spoke about the cafe's mission with the local community and Muhlenberg students by stating that, "Ever since we opened Jay's Local, we felt it was our mission to collaborate as much as possible with the local community to enhance the experience of our restaurant, the neighborhood and the Muhlenberg College students and faculty."

The mural is extravagant, and one can see the amount of work that was put into it from just one glance. Using the entirety of the wall, it stars three characters, each of a different ethnicity, as they eat ice cream and milkshakes. They are sur-

rounded by a blue background and are posing behind giant letters spelling out "ALLENTOWN." The fiery orange "ALLENTOWN" letters pop out exceptionally well with the light blue shades, and each character is wearing a pair of blue tinted sunglasses.

That rendition of the milkshake was further used by Jay's Local, and converted to a signature mural inspired drink one can get on the weekends.

Jay's Local partnered with a New York based art company called Dripped On Productions, which specializes in public art and street art. They work with many businesses, large corporations, events and festivals where they provide a variety of artistic services. Scherline commented on the creative process with Dripped On saying, "They were so creative and fun to work with! A fun fact is that the mural was painted entirely out of spray paint!"

Another main reason this mural was painted was because they wanted people to feel welcome and joyous when they en-

tered the street corner, and make something "modern" and "fun" for the West End residents and Muhlenberg students. Jay's creative director Josh Needle spoke about his experience with the local community, and how the mural is a reflection of that by saying, "We wanted the mural to be something that was modern and fun that would add a welcoming feeling to our street corner. Jay's Local is a place where Muhlenberg students and West End residents gather to eat, shop and experience all things local and we wanted a mural that would encapsulate that feeling and have it on full display all year round."

Jay's Local is a beloved part of the local neighborhood, and the new debut of the mural just serves to emphasize the fact that the little restaurant will always be a special place for both Muhlenberg students and the Allentown community.

[SEE MURAL ON PAGE 7](#)

# Possible mildew arises in on-campus housing

PHOTO BY EMILY ORLICH '24



Johnny Veglia '24 is distraught over the thought of mildew in his air-conditioning unit.

BY MATTHEW KLINGER  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

This year, there have been a number of students who have become ill, many of whom believe it is due to problems with residence halls, The Village and MILE houses. Those students complain of difficulty breathing as well as other allergy symptoms such as congestion, sneezing and coughing. With the rise of COVID-19 cases on campus, Health Services has been recommending that students who have experienced those symptoms get tested. However, those who have tested themselves have reported negative tests wonder what it is that is making them sick, and suspect issues with residence halls.

One student who chose to remain

anonymous detailed problems with Martin Luther Hall (ML), saying that, "You already know that the building is in bad shape when you approach the outside of it and already smell an odor. When you walk into the building, you get hit with a new smell. Then, when you walk into the dorm rooms, you get hit with a totally different smell. But there's a difference between the building smelling and the smells causing health concerns too. I know from personal experience, and other people too, that it is causing coughing and sinus congestion, all signs of some irritation that the body is trying to get rid of."

Students have also been complaining about problems with window air conditioning (AC) units in ML. A student commented saying, "I have heard from many students that coming onto campus [that] their AC was dirty, even though when I

spoke with Plant Operations they claimed that the ACs are cleaned every summer. When I had the AC on, I felt my symptoms worsening."

Giovanna Evans '25 echoed those sentiments saying, "I have severe allergies and asthma. And while living in ML, my symptoms worsened rapidly. I constantly felt suffocated in the hallways and bathrooms." Evans was able to move to East Hall, and saw an improvement saying, "I already feel a lot better, and I am glad I got to change buildings."

According to an email from Housing and Residence Life (HRL) they have "received 13 reports which were investigated and determined to be unfounded. Despite this, in some cases, students were given the opportunity to change their housing assignment due to other concerns and/or to maximize their overall comfort in the residence halls. Each report is investigated thoroughly."

While HRL claims that, "In almost all cases when a student reports mold, it is actually mildew, dirt or dust that has built up during the time students are living in a room," the Environmental Protection Agency defines mildew as "certain kinds of mold or fungus."

However, the 13 reports of mildew this year are nothing new. Housing said that, "Each year, we receive an average of 100 reports from students referencing a possibility of mold or mildew and we address each of those individually. Plant Operations has checked and the number to date for this year is on trend with the number of reports we received last academic year at this time."

While most of the reports are unfounded, HRL still prioritizes the health of students by conducting a precautionary antimicrobial treatment where a report has been made. In addition, HRL conducts air quality tests periodically, and "recent

results showed that all indoor bioaerosol samples were within normal limits based on both indoor air quality consensus agency guidelines and as compared to the outdoor sample. The total spore counts in each indoor sampling location were low."

Housing instructs students to make a report immediately if there are visible signs of mold or mildew. That report should include a detailed description including a picture. Students who are experiencing health problems are recommended to book an appointment with Health Services or their primary care physician.

While students might feel apprehensive about new cold and allergy symptoms since moving on campus, there are possible explanations for their sickness beyond mildew and mold growth in the residence halls. HRL says that, "In general, students living in congregant residential settings often get sick more frequently than they did in their home environment. In addition, sometimes in moving to the Valley, students don't realize that there is a higher pollen count which often leads to new allergies or worsened allergy symptoms for some students. Ultimately, students often immediately look for external factors that could be contributing to their sickness, however those allergy and viral illnesses are most often associated with being busy college students in a highly populated living space."



# ‘Berg hosts heated Congressional debate

*Candidates Rep. Susan Wild and Lisa Scheller vie for PA’s 7th Congressional District.*

By KATHERINE CONLON  
CO-NEWS EDITOR

A horde of students and supporters gathered in the Seegers Union Event Space on Oct. 6 for what turned out to be an impassioned debate. Competing for Pennsylvania’s 7th Congressional District seat in the U.S. House of Representatives in this midterm election are incumbent Congresswoman Susan Wild (D) and President and CEO of Silberline Manufacturing Lisa Scheller (R). The debate was moderated by CEO and president of The Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce Tony Iannelli, for his locally broadcasted show “Business Matters” on WFMZ-TV.

The filmed event truly kicked off when it was announced that audience participation was not only allowed, but encouraged. What proceeded was a rowdy, hour-long conversation, featuring several audience interjections that often prevented the candidates from finishing their sentences.

The debate covered several hot button political issues, including: abortion, the economy, immigration, the January 6 insurrection and foreign policy. China was a particular point of interest, especially in regard to Scheller’s business dealings. Wild accused her opponent of closing a factory in Pennsylvania’s Carbon County (a recent addition to the 7th district) and moving production to a facility in China. Perhaps with this accusation on her mind, Scheller uttered an unfortunate slip-up saying, “we want to improve our relationship with China” but then corrected herself noting, “we’ve got to improve our relationship with the environment... It was a very terrible gaffe.”

On the subject of the environment and climate change, the candidates had starkly opposing views. “We are nowhere near being able to go to renewable energy,” stated Scheller. Wild retorted saying, “When is it going to be soon enough, when the planet burns up?”

Healthcare, specifically prescription drug prices, was an issue where Wild touted her accomplishments throughout the debate. “My very first mission which I took on and which I’ve continued to this day is bringing down prescription drug prices... I’ve been working on that since before inflation even became an issue,” noted Wild. Scheller agreed with Wild’s sentiment but took issue with the Congresswoman’s path to getting there saying, “I am all for reducing drug prices. But that’s not the way to do it by having the government become more involved.”

With the overturning of Roe v. Wade last June, abortion was at the forefront of the debate. Wild gave her pro-choice stance declaring, “What I hear from my opponent is that she doesn’t trust women to make their own decisions... I personally believe that the government does not belong in your doctor’s office.” Scheller is decidedly pro-life but accused Wild of exaggerating her views in attack advertisements put out by the Wild campaign. “Susan Wild has lied about my position... I do support exceptions for rape, incest and the life of the mother.”

The attention was redirected to the war in Ukraine with Scheller boldly stating that “Joe Biden and Susan Wild created the war by buying oil from Russia... energy independence is going to be the key to national security.” Wild denounced this accusation, “It’s amazing to me that my opponent thinks that the war in Ukraine is about oil. The war in Ukraine is about trying to get Ukraine back into the USSR. This is a power grab. This is a land grab.”

One issue that the candidates agreed on was policing. Scheller expressed that “part of the American Dream that I’ve always talked about is having a safe community... Right now, crime is rampant, in all of our cities, particularly large, Democrat-run cities... I want to make our city safe and to do that we need to support our men in uniform.” Scheller added that Wild voted to defund the police. However, Wild deflected this claim saying, “We voted on a package of four Democratic



PHOTO COURTESY OF KRISTI MORRIS

Tony Iannelli moderated the debate between candidates Lisa Scheller and Susan Wild.

bills to help our police forces... this defund the police stuff, enough. You’ve got these talking points from the GOP.”

After the debate had concluded, Muhlenberg students relayed their thoughts on the event to The Weekly. “Debates like this are important and it’s a good public service for an institution like Muhlenberg to do. For me specifically, Muhlenberg hosting the debate gave me the opportunity to watch it in person, which I wouldn’t have had otherwise. I also got to speak with one of the candidates on my own afterward, which I appreciated being able to do,” said Liam Skopal ‘26.

Olivia Tebsherany ‘23 shared that “My main problem with the debate was the unprofessionalism of the moderator. I understand the debate was a more conversational format, but his wording of the questions and his attitude towards the audience when he was the one that invited us to react vocally was abysmal.”

Madison Rosensaft ‘23 gave her opinion noting, “I would say that overall Scheller seemed a lot more prepared to attack Wild... Wild seemed to talk more

about policy even though she got pretty heated at moments.” Paige Weisburg ‘23 voiced her thoughts saying, “The candidates didn’t seem prepared at all for the questions they were going to be asked and for such an important race that was surprising.”

Marissa Cohen ‘25 shared her opinion on the candidates saying, “This debate further solidified my opinions of both candidates. I’ve supported Wild since I came to Muhlenberg last year, and I always thought she was a solid candidate. While Wild was factual and composed throughout the entire debate, Scheller seemed to be pulling straws and rarely spoke of substance, often reverting to buzzwords instead of explaining her views on certain issues.”

The first half of the debate was aired on Oct. 10 at 7:30 p.m. and the latter half will premiere on Oct. 17 at the same time. Voter registration in PA ends on Oct. 24. Students registered in Allentown can vote in-person at Seegers Union on Nov 8. Applications for a mail-in ballot must be submitted by Nov. 1.

FROM LAND PAGE 1

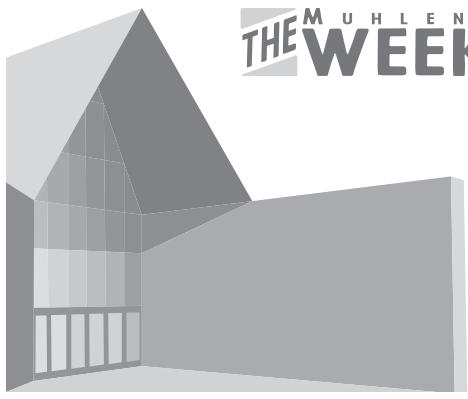
of writing a land acknowledgement at the request of President Harring. We quickly realized that we needed to do a lot more background research into who the Lenape are today and their history before writing a land acknowledgement which could come off as performative if not done correctly. The project turned into a multi-semester project that is still ongoing. Our goal with the land acknowledgement discussion is to educate students, faculty and administrators about the Lenape today as well as the role land acknowledgements may or may not play in higher education institutions.”

Carter emphasized that, “There are Muhlenberg courses that discuss Indigenous Peoples of the U.S. such as Dr. Antonovich’s class ‘The American West’ and Dr. Corbin’s ‘Native American Literature & Film,’ but there are very limited courses that specifically address the Delaware/Lenape.” Siteman and Carter stated that “We’re hoping

to continue this research, and we’re definitely looking for more researchers for this project. We also want to screen a documentary called “The Water Gap: Return to the Homeland,” which showcases the journey of Lenape youth as they travel back to their ancestral homeland to connect with their Lenape identity.”

An anonymous Muhlenberg student who attended the Land Acknowledgement discussion said that “I am thankful to be a part of the conversation to acknowledge the land stolen from the Lenape tribe and grateful that this conversation is reaching audiences at colleges in Pennsylvania such as Muhlenberg... [Siteman and Carter] want to make these Land Acknowledgement discussions more ongoing, but it’s really hard to know what the next phase is.”





"There has to be flexibility in a play because that's part of the form of it to me."  
- Jackie Sibblies Drury

## Cast and crew reflect on "We Are Proud to Present...."

BY SAMANTHA TEMPKIN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

“We Are Proud To Present A Presentation About the Herero of Namibia, Formerly Known as South West Africa, From the German Südwestafrika, Between the Years 1884-1915” by Jackie Sibblies Drury portrays the efforts of six actors as they tell the story of a period in history that they simultaneously know nothing and everything about: the Herero and Namaqua genocide at the hands of Germany. The play is a testament to how systems of oppression allow violence against Black and Brown bodies to continue for centuries, yet is also an urgent call for change and unity in the cause of dismantling systemic racism. Last weekend, “We Are Proud To Present...” hit the Muhlenberg stage as this semester’s first mainstage production, setting the example of what theater is capable of.

The cast and crew’s experiences working on “We Are Proud To Present...” reveal how much mental, physical and emotional safety was valued throughout the process. A multitude of resources were provided to support all those working on the production, including access to production counselors Ian Wagner and Aliya Kenyatta who were available on-site during several rehearsals and after all performances. The value that was placed on establishing trusting relationships between cast members as well as easing the cast in tackling some of the play’s most intense moments is also evident. They participated in a lot of group bonding ac-

tivities such as dinners at director Nigel Semaj’s home, visiting assistant professor of theater and dance/directing, house, keeping up a light-hearted mood with voguing and dance breaks and general discussions about their characters and the show within rehearsals. In addition, the cast also engaged in a “check in, check out” system with their fellow actors to get into the character’s mindset that they needed for the show and to leave that mindset behind when the run was over. This required the actors to check in and check out with each member of the cast by having a special dance or action that each pair would do before and after the show. Cast members also checked in and out with themselves with certain tactics such as making playlists or taking their own quiet time to reflect on their performances and the show overall.

Participating in such a groundbreaking production has forever impacted all those involved with the piece, both onstage and off. Associate Director Elizabeth Muriel ‘23 said, “As an artist, I’m really interested in pieces of theater that serve the purpose of talking about anti-racism and seeking to inform people about things that they’ve never heard of before... this piece should make people angry. I think we should be angry about all of the things that we haven’t had the opportunity to learn or talk about, and all of the stories that have been censored throughout history.”

Chris Rubingh ‘24 portrayed Actor 3/ Another White Man and said, “Uncomfortability is not a bad thing, especially in theater, and it’s that uncomfortability

that pushes us and makes us see the truth in a lot of scenarios. Without being uncomfortable, we can’t always experience what we need to or what a playwright wants us to.”

Amira Jackson ‘24, who played Actor 6/ Black Woman, said “people often think that Muhlenberg is this all-inclusive lovely college and to an extent it is, but there’s still things that need to be done. There’s also this idea of some people’s history being more important than others, that’s also something that, we need to work on as a college... we’re so uncomfortable with these ugly truths, and the more we run from them and the more we try to push them into the past, the more history is gonna repeat itself. If we don’t take that time to sit in that discomfort and put ourselves in situations that are going to be uncomfortable but will teach us something, then we can’t really be in a society where it’s equal and where race isn’t a factor in which we’re arguing about every single day.”

Jackson’s understudy, Naava Wilson ‘25, expressed her hopes for what Muhlenberg took away from this production, stating, “Don’t forget about this play. Don’t forget about the story. Don’t forget about the way that it makes you feel. I hope everyone feels something like anger, disgust or [discomfort]... I hope they ask questions about why we’re feeling like this, I hope they went home and looked up this genocide because I know some people were like, ‘Wait, is this a thing that actually happened?’” Although Wilson and the rest of the understudies are credited as understudies, they were able to perform

during multiple performances, serving as more of a tandem process or swing.

Semaj, the driving force behind this production, introduced several students to “We Are Proud To Present...” by including the play in many of their class curriculums last semester, including Jackson’s directing class and Wilson’s “Dramatic Text in Action” class. Wilson expressed her appreciation for Semaj and their inclusion of this play in the curriculum: “They’re very big on teaching us texts by writers of color and queer writers and all of that stuff that we usually don’t get to see... it was like this insane play that was so good but also so frustrating.” Engaging with the material in classes made the two very familiar with the script and its significance, leading them to audition and to receive the roles of Actor 6/Black Woman and her understudy respectively. Those who were not in these classes also recognized how monumental the play was and the impact it would have on Muhlenberg audiences.

Elizabeth Vichness ‘25 who understudied Actor 5/Sarah, reflected on a conversation she had with Semaj recently, stating, “I was saying that I feel like in the past I’ve been doing theater just to do theater because I love to do it, and now I’m more interested in doing theater for a purpose, or theater for a cause. There’s nothing wrong with having fun shows, but I’m interested now in exploring what that looks like, especially in an educational setting.”

SEE **PRESENT** PAGE 6

## Super seniors talk about their artistry at ‘Berg

BY DANNY MILKIS  
CO-ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

Ever since the COVID-19 quarantine, Muhlenberg has seen a noticeable uptick in graduating seniors staying one or even two semesters past their intended graduation date. Many of these cases were students who desired experiential learning over video-conferencing. They are colloquially known as ‘super-seniors,’ though most of them will complete their Muhlenberg education in eight semesters. Some students, though, are staying for a ninth semester. The ways in which the influx of online learning as a primary source of collegiate lessons caused concern amongst student artists has been truly profound.

Will Howitt ‘23, a music, theatre and dance triple major, who is planning to stay an additional two semesters longer than the rest of his initial graduating

class, explained that his mindset has become much more introspective toward how he plans to apply his training post-graduation.

“I value my family, friendships and pursuits outside of my field, and the emphasis I’ve put in those aspects of my life has in turn enriched my experience and career view,” says Howitt. “We are not only what we learn, but how we are affected by it and how we affect others. The ostensible logic and facts of academia are helpful in the vacuum of college, but emotions and randomness rule the real world. It’s important to be prepared for those realities, learn to make the best of them, and find what makes you truly happy.”

“I’ve pretty much gone through my entire theatre major, and now I can use all of that knowledge and apply it to all of the projects I’m working on right now,” says Gabe Walsh-Shore ‘23. “I have a more holistic view of the entire curriculum, and

it’s been a huge success to be able to see everything in perspective.”

Without a doubt, the super-seniors who remain at Muhlenberg are faced with numerous challenges, including a constant feeling of isolation, as the collaborators and friends with whom they shared their craft since freshman year have graduated.

Walsh-Shore explains, “It’s difficult because you built all of those relationships with your class, and now that they are gone, you have to make new connections, which isn’t a bad thing, but it’s much more difficult to build up new rapport at this stage in the game.”

Another major challenge across the board has been coming to terms with the unknowns of post-graduation life, which are now ever-present in the minds of these fifth-year students.

“Being flexible is a must, and no matter how many books you read there are some

things that can only be learned once you’re thrown into the deep end,” explains Howitt. “Trying to control every aspect of your life not only won’t work, but it’ll also drive you up a wall. I’ve spent a lot of time thinking that I’ll learn nearly everything I need to know in school, when it’s really just one piece of a much larger puzzle. However, I’m grateful to be realizing this bit by bit right now while I still have so many wonderful resources and friends just down the block.”

In spite of the setbacks, these interviewees seemed very happy with the trajectory of their experience during the 2022-2023 school year, placing the quality of education at the forefront of their minds.

“My motivation to stay at Muhlenberg has always been the people,” says Molly

SEE **SENIORS** PAGE 6



## Living Writers

## Steven Dietz comes to campus

BY KEANNA PEÑA  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

“You are not the expert of your play” advises award winning playwright Steven Dietz, the second author to be featured in the Living Writers Series. Steven Dietz was named one of the 20 Most-Produced Playwrights in America (2019) with his thirty-plus plays and adaptations produced in over one hundred regional theatres. Dietz has had plays produced internationally in over twenty countries, and translated into dozens of languages.

For the Living Writers course, students read “This Random World: The Myth of Serendipity,” a comedic play that optimizes on missed connections. The multi-day event started with a staged reading of Dietz’s play Oct. 2 and a question and answer session (Q&A) followed by a discussion led by Associate Professor of English Gabriel Dean on Oct. 3.

The staged reading was directed by Dean, and it allowed students to see Dietz’s play come to life. Dietz himself was seated amongst the students in the intimate setting of the Recital Hall, where the reading took place.

In regards to putting together the staged reading, Dean commented, “The actors and I had roughly seven hours to rehearse the play, which meant that we were able to read it through once, do some minimal staging, character arc work and choose one or two images from the play to more fully realize. We got very little time to work through the scenes, but the work we did was focused and, I think, effective.”

Dean casted faculty from the College community for the reading. He said, “I thought they were quite excellent in their portrayals of these characters and enjoyed working with them all. It was an opportunity for students, especially theatre majors, to see their professors on stage,

which has happened very little since the pandemic. I think that aspect of the show was really well received too.” Indeed it was, as the room was filled with laughter at jokes never noticed before and intense silence where emotional scenes were performed. Jules Curtis ‘25 said that the staged reading “was fantastic! As a theatre major, it was a great experience to see some of my professors perform. The staged reading allowed me to make many more connections throughout the play. For example, I took notice of certain dialogue when someone performed it rather than when I read it.”

Tom Hiller ‘23 also commented that “I think it was really cool mostly because we were able to see the components of what a play was physically. One of the things that we have learned about plays, before viewing the live reading, is that they are made up of certain components such as it’s collaborative and has a commutative aspect, it’s meant to be seen. The world I created in my head when reading the script, while believable to me, could never feel truly lived in until I saw a much clearer picture with the live reading.”

The Q&A the following day was focused heavily on the writing process and nature of the play. Many students took the opportunity to ask questions in regards to creating characters, writing for different audiences, and inspiration. When talking about crafting characters, Dietz expressed that “you have to test your characters, stretch them like taffy.” At one point, Dietz even passed around his writing journal that contained the basis of the play. Hiller ‘23 said that “Although Dietz’s play is called ‘This Random World,’ Dietz had a very structured and intentional blueprint while creating the script. So hearing how he developed his script and physically seeing his notebook that was passed around helped me get into his creative process which can help me with my writing.”

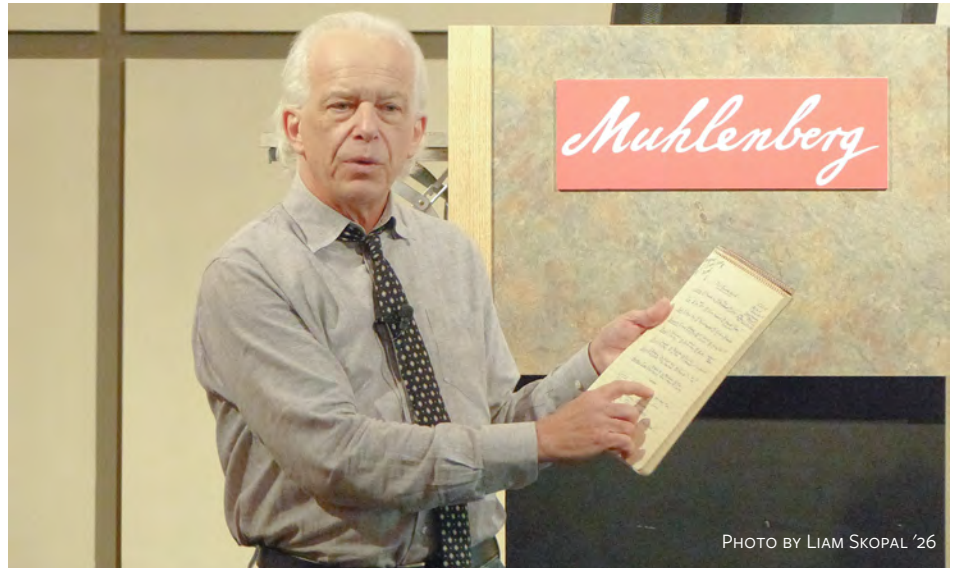


PHOTO BY LIAM SKOPAL '26

Playwright Steven Dietz talks about his play while holding the very notebook he wrote it in.

Later that evening, students, faculty and the greater Allentown community were welcome to come and listen to a talk-show style conversation with Dietz, which was led by Dean. Dean, a former graduate student of Dietz, utilized this conversation to ask questions about the structure of a play, what it’s like to see his play directed and produced and asked advice on behalf of the students about one’s craft. Dietz spoke from personal experience about giving directors free reign over his plays and being pleasantly surprised at the outcome. He emphasized to young playwrights, “you have to let your play surprise you.”

Dean believes that, “There was so much to get out of the Q&A and conversation. Dietz is pretty much a walking soundbyte. I saw students scribbling in their notebooks and struggling to keep up with the brilliance coming out of his mouth. He’s not only an amazing writer, but an exceptional teacher too and I think that aspect of his personality really came to life again this past weekend. I guess if I have to say one thing, then I hope the students who might be curious about play-

writing, but a little afraid to give it a try, take his advice and just give it a try.”

A few students also had the opportunity to have lunch with Dietz. Link Shuster ‘24 said, “I went to lunch with Dietz and it was a lot of fun! [He] is a very charismatic guy and has a lot to talk about. And he really does talk a lot about his own writing and has a lot of tips for new writers. He constantly mentioned how he had no idea where his plays would end up, and surprised himself along the way.”

Many students believe that Dietz was a great author to showcase during the Living Writers course. Hiller ‘24 commented that “I have found Living Writers extremely beneficial to me so far. As a writer, even if I never become a novelist or playwright, I’m listening to professional writers talk about universal ideas like craft and how to overcome challenges. Anyone can take something away from listening to them speak.”

## FROM SENIORS PAGE 5

McCarthy ‘22. “I have some really great mentors here and my friends make it feel like home. I’ve thought about transferring but it always seemed easier to create the opportunities I am missing rather than just leave the school and start everything over again. And at this point I really just want to get my degree so I can start figuring out what I really want to do with my life.”

“One of my friends looks at Muhlenberg as an oven,” explains Nikki Gardener ‘23. “You just keep cooking with knowledge, and the great thing is: it’s impossible to get overcooked.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF WILL HOWITT '23

Super seniors Gabe Walsh-Shore ‘23, Will Howitt ‘23, and Nikki Gardener ‘22 (right/left) speak on their decisions to stay at Muhlenberg for more than eight semesters.

## FROM PRESENT PAGE 5

Sam McGuire ‘25, who portrayed Actor 1/White Man, was very attentive of the “check in, check out” process and stressed how important and beneficial it was to make sure other members of the cast felt safe. He said, “It was very moment to moment and a quick check in. You check in with your partner, it takes a second, and then you are confident from there that what you’re doing is within the role of the play, and then you check out and that’s it.”

Another element of the production that shows the prioritization of the cast’s safety was the inclusion of a facilitation at the end in place of bows, giving both the cast and audience time to process and

reflect on what just happened. In this facilitation, Semaj established the intent of this production and left the audience with the motivation to make a change with the statement, “We are in this together, liberation constitutes liberation for all of us, and if all of us are not in it, then none of us are in it. So let’s start the work here—today, tonight—to be a community and work to destroy the systems of oppression that are at work.”



# 'Berg continues "From the Ashes..." series with "Interracial Solidarity and Erasures: Latinx Identity and its Intersections"

BY SHINAM HUSSAIN  
STAFF WRITER

On Monday Oct. 3, Muhlenberg held an event in the "From the Ashes of Relentless Racial Crises: Building a New United States of America" series titled "Interracial Solidarity and Erasures: Latinx Identity and its Intersections" with Melinda González, Ph.D., Leticia Robles-Moreno, Ph.D., and Tiffany Montoya, Ph.D., for Hispanic Heritage Month.

The talk began with an interactive presentation given by González introducing the concept of racial identities, then speaking about Latinx identities. González dedicated this presentation to unpacking Latinx identities, specifically enlightening the audience about who is considered a part of the Latinx community, and then the struggles the community faces today. González led a discussion about the social, economic and political issues facing the Latinx community today, discussing issues such as Latina women making fifty-five cents for every seventy-nine cents a white woman makes and how domestic born Latinx people in America are treated as foreigners.

The concluding statements of González's presentation also served as an introduction to the panel, allowing for more discussions about Latinx identities and for the educational process to continue. Emanuela Kucik, Ph.D., facilitated the discussion for the panel, which consisted of González, Moreno and Montoya, and it was also open to the audience. An audience member asked all three panelists how a member of the Latinx community should go about feeling responsible for educating and advocating for the community in their everyday lives. To this question, González answered that while



Melinda González, Ph.D., Tiffany Montoya, Ph.D., and Leticia Robles-Moreno, Ph.D. discuss Latinx Identity and its Intersections.

one should be proud of their identity and share what they feel is comfortable and necessary for them, it is not your job to educate others. The panel concluded with

ing." To this, González responded saying, "Be mindful how you take up space to those not oppressed. Be authentic. To those oppressed, be joyful. Joy is how we

**"If you're not Latinx, find ways to spend time in that community, listening and learning."**

asking all three of the panelists if they were able to give one piece of advice or support to the audience, what would it be?

Montoya responded by saying, "If you're not Latinx, find ways to spend time in that community, listening and learn-

continue to live. Take a class on anything not colonialism."

In addition to "Interracial Solidarity and Erasures: Latinx Identity and its Intersections," Muhlenberg commemorated Hispanic Heritage month with different activities and events, including a

90s style Latinx photoshoot, and a day dedicated to culturally Hispanic food in the Wood Dining Commons.

Eva M. Vaquera '23, a member of Muhlenberg Comunidad expressed, "Muhlenberg definitely stepped up more so than previous years for Hispanic Heritage Month, but there's always room for more. I appreciated their effort to have traditional meals representing Latin America in the dining hall. However, it was disappointing it was only one day. I would have liked to have seen more meals from Latin America sprinkled throughout the month."

When asked about Muhlenberg facilitating and hosting events regarding talks about identity, Vaquera '23 responded "I definitely enjoy the events focusing on racial identity as it makes me think of my own identity and what I grew up identifying as. Overall, the talks are insightful and I would argue should be done throughout the semester, so they're not limited to Hispanic Heritage Month."

Audience member Giovanni Merrifield '23 was asked his opinion on the event, to which he responded, "I really enjoyed the event. One thing that really struck me was how countries that were not colonized by the Spaniards or Portuguese were considered Latin countries. I knew that French derived from the Latin language family, but I just never really considered them part of the Latin language family because it is not included in discussion surrounding Latin colonizers. With that said, I realized that the people of countries such as Martinique, Dominica and Guadeloupe would be considered Latine because they were colonized by the French who derive their language from Latin. The event was really [pro]ductive and wonderful."



FROM JAY'S PAGE 3

PHOTO BY EMILY ORLICH '24

New Jay's Local mural draws positive attention from Muhlenberg students and West End residents alike.





By PAIGE WEISBURG  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

# Paige’s Page

Hey besties! Happy October! Welcome to this week’s edition of Paige’s Page! It’s actually starting to feel like fall, and don’t get me wrong, I love this season, I just don’t think me or my closet quite frankly were ready for this seemingly sudden change in weather. I had my first ever pumpkin spice latte like three weeks ago and I get the hype. Muhlenberg looks so pretty this time of year, I am excited to wear sweaters and break out my boots! All of you also seem to be excited for fall and I have gotten quite a few questions for this spooky season. Let’s go!

Hey Paige, I feel like I should already have my Halloween costumes planned but I can’t think of anything! Help!

Hi bestie! I am so glad you asked this question! I love Halloween. It is the most

fun holiday of the year. I have always been the kind of person that waits until literally the last possible second to plan my Halloween costume. It would be like October 27th and I would be on YouTube watching “25 last minute Halloween costumes” videos like my life depended on it. I honestly never use anything in those videos, but they are great for inspiration. I actually only have two costumes planned so far for this year but Halloween is on a Monday so we have to get it together! I personally love a pop-culture-reference costume. But I don’t like to do something that was from the past year or so, I like my references a little bit more dated and a lot more iconic. For example, freshman year, I was Muhlenberg-family-celebrity Ariana Grande in like 2017 where she almost exclusively wore a big sweatshirt and over-the-knee boots. I looked so cute, everyone knew who I was, and I was super comfortable (which is the key). Last year I pulled out a look that required a little more preparation which was Britney Spears in the “Slave 4 U” music video, I literally crocheted a snake for it—it was everything. I really like costumes that you also just make up. In high school I was a Coachella unicorn, and that really just meant I wanted to wear a horn and also a flower crown, but it worked. Do a random group of people with your friends and you will all look like you tried even if you didn’t. Anything is a costume if you present it with enough confidence, so have fun and don’t

take yourself too seriously, but if you won’t be working out of your closet, you should probably place that order in your shopping cart soon!

Hi Paige! Happy fall! Do you have any recommendations for my fall playlist, I need some music to get me into this mood!

Hey bestie! I love love love this question. My music taste has been described as “causing other people to experience whiplash.” I like a lot of different things and those things never really go together, and most of the time people would not ever ask me to make them a playlist. But you did, so here I go! I don’t know what your fall music vibe is but mine is definitely “sad girl autumn.” Not because I’m sad, necessarily, but because the music is just better. So I would do a lot of Taylor Swift—“Folklore,” “Red (Taylor’s Version),” “Punisher” by Phoebe Bridgers, “Emails I Can’t Send” by Sabrina Carpenter (the more sad ones give me more fall but the whole album is amazing), “Renegade” by Big Red Machine, oh and you cannot forget “Scary” by Meghan thee Stallion ft. Rico Nasty—big Halloween vibes, it’s incredible. Oh! And how could I forget “Midnights” comes out next week. Based on what Taylor has hinted, I think it would also be a fantastic edition to this group! I think this is actually the most cohesive I have ever

been in my music choices. I hope that works for you, and if it doesn’t, you were warned!

Hi Paige! Do you have any cute and fun fall date ideas?

Hey bestie! Aww! This is really cute if this is your way of asking me on a cute fall date! But if it’s not, how dare you ask me this! Just kidding... I think fall is a really sweet time for those of you dating or going on dates because there are so many options of fun things to do outside while the weather is still pretty nice. I think apple or pumpkin picking can be really cute; walking around at an orchard is always a good time. You can take one of those pictures in the head of a cow or something! Pumpkin carving or painting since Halloween is coming up. Being creative with a partner can be so cute. Coffee dates or picnics are good in the warmer months, but making them seasonal can add some spice to a classic date option. Enjoy each other’s company! Happy cuffing season!

Paige’s Page Live is officially happening! Nov. 10 at 10 p.m. in the Red Door! Can’t wait to see you all there!

You can submit questions to <https://tinyurl.com/paigespagequestion>. It will also be linked in my Instagram bio—@paigeweisburg and in The Muhlenberg Weekly Instagram Linktree.

# Fatal fandoms and their harmful online presence

groups.

When someone is your best friend, you are loyal to them. Given that many people feel emotional connections to their celebrity idols, they will defend their actions, even if they are harmful. Many celebrities have been caught saying racial slurs, or participating in cultural appropriation within recent years: Morgan Wallen, Madonna, Gigi Hadid and more. These are actions that should not be tolerated, and we should not be setting the example that they are okay. The effect that these acts of ignorance and/or hatred have on minority communities should be prioritized more than how good the artist may be. Imagine going on the internet and seeing a bunch of people using or justifying a language targeted against you. That is not a safe community. Not to mention, the majority of the defenders are white, and it is not their place to deem something as offensive, as it does not affect them. If you really love someone, you should call them out for their behaviors, and help them grow into a better human being. Encouraging or justifying their harmful actions will do nothing except elevate their power over society, and form hateful communities on social media sites used by a majority of the 2022 public.

In the same breath, social media sites are riddled left and right with public opinions and commentary that anyone can share with just a click of a button. Not everyone agrees with each other. Some may think that Adele was rightful in winning “Best Album Award” at the 2017 Grammys, while others may swear that Beyoncé deserved it. Either way, everyone

is allowed to think whatever they want, so long as they are not being overtly offensive. However, many differences in opinion have led to intense online arguments, resulting in the doxing of many internet users. This is the public sharing of private or identifying information about an individual that has the potential to harm and exploit them. As a result, many people have been outed as queer, relentlessly body shamed and overall bullied off of the internet as a result of petty disagreements. This provides one potential explanation as to why teen suicides have increased directly in correspondence to the use of social media.

On the topic of the exploitation of sexuality, another large problem is the conspiracy theories formed about celebrities’ sexualities. For example, many people believe that Harry Styles and Louis Tomlinson, two former members of the popular boy band One Direction, are romantically involved with each other. Many avid “Larries,” which is what these fans are referred to as, scour the internet for evidence of this alleged relationship and often over-step private boundaries, as Tomlinson has constantly had to reassure the fact that he is straight. It is possible that this is a false claim made in order to disperse the unwanted rumors, but in that case, Tomlinson would be choosing to keep his sexuality hidden from the public eye. While celebrities put themselves on a pedestal just by being famous, they are still human beings with emotions. There is a certain line that should not be crossed, and subjects as delicate as the expression of one’s sexuality is a perfect example.

The journey of discovering your queer identity and how you want to express it is very meaningful to one’s life. It should not be disrupted or tampered with. By searching for private information that may expose someone’s sexuality, fans are essentially forcing someone out of the closet, whether they intend to or not. These rumors stemmed from the fact that the two boys were under strict management that forbid them from being openly queer, an issue that has been prevalent in Hollywood industries for years and that needs to be addressed. However, there are safer alternatives to dealing with the homophobia behind production and management companies. Billy Eichner, for example, has just made the first romantic comedy featuring a gay couple that has been produced by a major motion picture studio, “Bros.” The fight for queer representation in media is incredibly important, and something that we as a society should strive for. However, it is just as important to be cognisant of the fact that not all queer experiences are the same, and we need to be respectful of other people’s lives.

It is okay to have a favorite celebrity. It is okay to listen to their music on repeat, take inspiration from how they dress, and look up to them. But we can not abandon our moral code just because we appreciate the art that they make. Before celebrities are famous and before we are fans, we are human beings. I love my Harry Styles poster as much as the next girl, but every once in a while, it is important to remind yourself that he is just a piece of paper that you got from Amazon.



PHOTO BY LLOYD WAKEFIELD  
@LLOYDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDD/INSTAGRAM

Harry Styles is not your best friend.

Waking up next to someone every morning is an intimate experience. They are your first impression of every day, as they greet you with a comforting smile on a sunny Sunday morning. It is a consistency in a world full of uncertainty and stress, and it makes you feel closer to them. You love them!

I hate to be the one to tell you this; but the Harry Styles poster hung up on your dorm room wall does not feel the same way about you.

Parasocial relationships, defined by Dictionary.com as, “a relationship that a person imagines having with another person whom they do not actually know, such as a celebrity or a fictional character,” has led many fandoms to weaponize the love they feel for their favorite singers, actors, athletes, etc. Using the internet, they tend to spread immoral ideals, and practice acts of bigotry and harm towards minority





# Listen Loudly

...

A creative space for marginalized voices



PHOTO BY MARIA ISABEL CASTILLO '23

## who am i (who are you)

BY MARIA ISABEL CASTILLO  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

who was i?

but who are you?

your right hand or the last person on your mind

i hope they find you beautiful

was i beautiful?

genuinely.

did it appear as if my problems were masked well?

not the version that is perceived

i hope so.

but the you that is stripped down, all the way

was i too much?

no filter to stand behind

people find it easier to leave me at the surface level

for someone like you is too sublime to be in hiding.

shallow isn't it?

unveiled.

to think that humans can hyper compartmentalize emotions

it's unrealistic, but its easier that way

people hide themselves so much don't they?

just in case we hurt one another

cant just have you leaving me out here naked

so why so scared?

for i am too vulnerable if every part of me is unveiled.

## does the black cat cry at night?

BY HOPE BIDDLE  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The freezing olivine eyes  
Of the domesticated wild cat strikes  
Silence that reverberates in circles  
Around endless metal bars, hugging  
The black cat back to its forced existence

We ask how it too cries  
With the choices it made

You sit, the back of your thighs sticking,  
Accumulating the inherited fear  
Of hierarchy  
The seamless black coat  
Of the black cat rubs back and  
Forth, back and forth,  
Forward, then the closest it can be to  
You, to dizzy you,  
Itself unaware that even a predator can be envious

We ask how it too cries  
With the choices it made

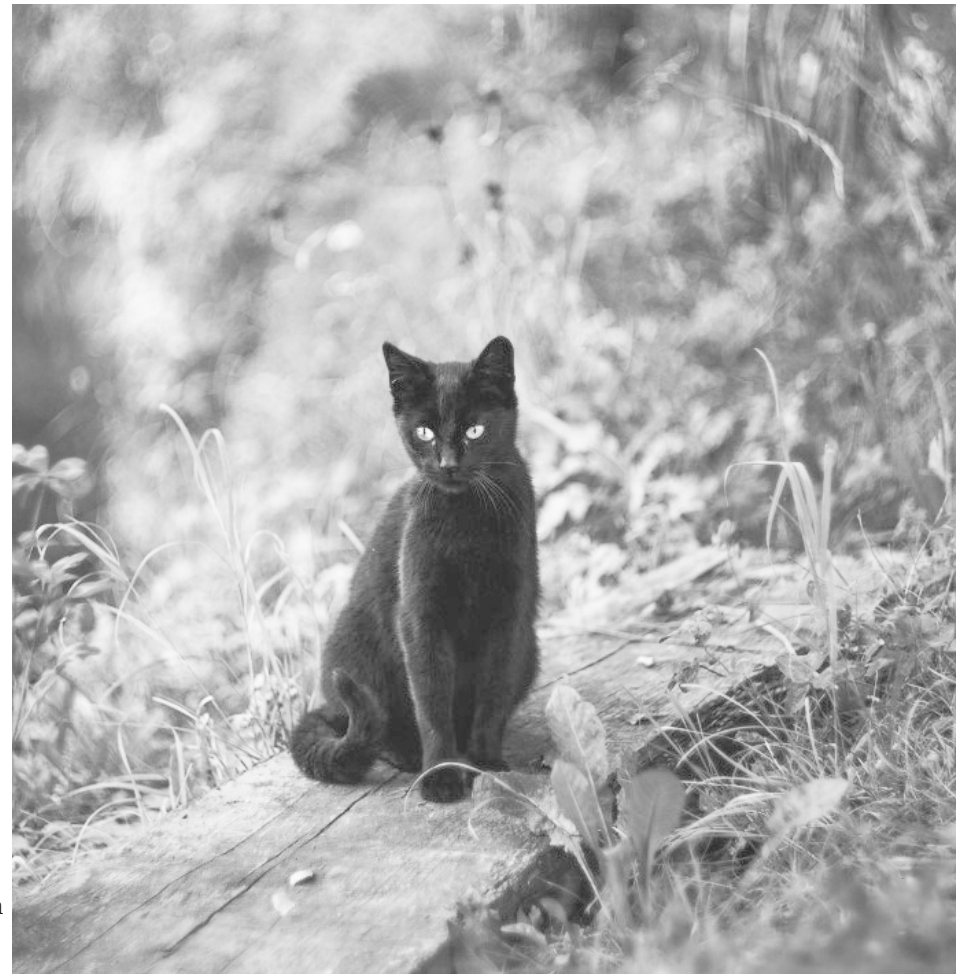


PHOTO COURTESY OF JOANNA MALINOWSKA/NEGATIVESPACE.COM

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor (bergweeklyoped@gmail.com) or the Editor-in-Chief (weeklyeditor@gmail.com) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.



# 22 sports, one team III

## *Prioritizing the mental health of student-athletes*

BY DYLAN ROSENBLATT  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

The student-led organization Head in the Game was founded in the spring of 2021 by Joel Hark '22, two-year captain of the golf team, and Natalie Smith '22, an essential leader in softball's bid to the NCAA Tournament. Following their graduation the club, focus on prioritizing the mental health of the athletes here at Muhlenberg, needed new leadership to keep the group's momentum moving forward. The answer? Star women's basketball forward Sara Peretti '23.

Peretti has taken the helm of the organization and is teaching the athletes of Muhlenberg how to care for their minds. "After being the secretary of the executive board since the beginning of this club, under former co-presidents Joel and Natalie, my intention is to carry their standards through the future of Muhlenberg. They set very high standards, and we all shared one common goal: to increase mental health awareness amongst the student-athlete community. This passion for spreading awareness and forming this community over the past three years has been a very special experience for myself, and with knowing how much it took for this to happen, I only want this community to continue growing into everything

it can be," Peretti said.

Many people hear that athletes have a lot on their plate, but not all know what that plate consists of. Along with (at least) the normal workload of any college student, every week is a grind, as almost every day of the week—even during their off-season—athletes must usually take part in some sort of team activity. Whether it's a 7:00 a.m. lift, 6:30 a.m. conditioning practice, or a game/match, the schedule of an athlete can sometimes become overbearing, especially when also trying to experience the social life of a college student.

Not only does Peretti have to prepare for the grind of the basketball season, which begins in less than a month, but she's also had to transition Head in the Game from being led by its founders to now being directed by her and Vice President Caley Tereska '23, volleyball defensive specialist. "The transition into the lone president position has been challenging but incredible. There are many other student-athletes on the [executive] board that aid in the weekly planning of meetings and handle all other aspects of the club ranging from fundraising to social media and event planning. Although we have different titles and descriptions within the club, we have formed a

tight-knit and collaborative community that has worked very well. I have a busy academic schedule with being a biology major enrolled in three biology labs this semester. Other members of the [executive] board also have busy schedules, so we make it work with open communication."

After being part of the organization since its early days, Peretti knows that some weeks the club may vary in the way it is run depending on the schedules of all of its members. According to her, that is the beauty of it. When speaking about what she plans to do throughout the year, Peretti said: "My plan for the rest of the year is not set in stone. That's the beauty of the club, believe it or not. It is not perfect and it will not be perfect. I have endless ideas for discussion-based group meetings, but there are some weeks when I notice exams and work are kicking into high gear for most people, so I'll want to plan a group de-stressor activity. Those activities can range from taking a walk, watching football, or doing homework in good company. The [executive] board and I are currently working on a fundraiser to raise money for a speaker. I would love to incorporate an educational aspect into the club as Joel and Natalie did last year because it is certainly important for

athletes to be aware of their nutritional, physical and mental needs."

There's no denying that Head in the Game, which Peretti defines as "a community of student-athletes that meet weekly to discuss and educate themselves about the many mental health challenges they face daily," has been and will continue to be, a great addition for the student-athletes of Muhlenberg.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS.

Sara Peretti '23 is a star on the court and as the president of Head in the Game.

# Chasing success—literally and figuratively

## *A year of overall improvement for Muhlenberg's cross country programs*

BY MEREDITH RAAB  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

If you asked this year's cross-country team how they define the season, a majority would say it's been a year of overall improvement.

So far both teams have improved this season in all three of their meets. On Sept. 16 at The Mainline Invitational, the 10 team members who competed in the same event last year set new course personal records [PRs]. Last weekend was the first time at Lehigh University for three of the seventeen Muhlenberg runners. According to Head Coach Brad Hackett, of the 14 veteran runners, all recorded career highs for the Lehigh course.

The captains and veterans of the teams have been setting examples for their teammates, inspiring them to find their greatness.

"When we see others hit a PR it gives everyone energy and motivation to carry the torch," said Jason Ivey '23, captain of the men's team. "Given our improving performances and close-knit group, we all support and feed off each other's success."



PHOTO COURTESY OF CAITLIN KINNAR '24

Cross country team members smile even as their season comes to a close.

This high team morale has been a crucial factor in their success.

"Running is not an easy sport mentally or physically," says Adrienne Ellison '23, captain of the women's team. "I am so proud to be on such a close and supportive team. We are all working hard at practice and supporting each other on and off the track."

This season has been an advancement of the team and program. From day one to the final race (before the conference championships) against DeSales Univer-

sity on Oct. 8, the teams have been and will continue to—work hard day in and day out.

The DeSales Invitational on Oct. 8 presented a particularly challenging course, that the Mules overcame.

The women placed 10th out of 19 squads (eighth amongst Division III schools). Caitlin Kinnear '24 led the women's team for the first time in her career by placing 24th overall in a race with 203 finishers. Ellison was right behind, placing 26th overall.

"Jem Berney ['26] made their debut in the season, and they were our 4th finishing runner!" said Ellison. "Caiti Kinnear has shown significant improvement in each meet this season and finished in the top 25 this Saturday in this highly competitive race."

The Mule men placed 11th out of 20 teams, and eighth out of Division III schools. Adam Stefan '23 led the men's squad for the fourth consecutive meet, placing 23rd overall and 17th among Division III athletes in a race of 251 finishers.

The main focus of the season is the team's performance in the conference championship and regionals, Oct. 29 and Nov. 12 respectively. The women's and

men's teams have been running their highest mileage and most challenging workouts to reach their season goals.

"On the men's side, we want to be top five in the conference and top 10 in the region," says Ivey. "Individually, we want everyone to PR at conferences and regionals for those running."

As for the women, "We have a younger team this year with a ton of potential," says Ellison. "Last year, we placed 7th at regionals which are the highest in school history, and we think we can strive for the top 10 again this year."

"As a team, our goal is to perform at our highest level at the conference meet and even more so at the NCAA qualifier," says Hackett.

Based on the hard work, dedication, and improvement from both teams at every one of their meets, they have high hopes going into conferences and regionals.

The cross-country team will be competing Oct. 29 at 11 a.m. for conference championships in Haverford, PA, and Nov. 12, at 11 a.m. for the NCAA Metro Regional in Center Valley, PA.



# What makes a team?

## *Amadou Diop is an invaluable coach with years of unique experience*

BY MATTHEW WAGNER  
ROOKIE WRITER

**"Amadou adds a positive energy and light to the team."**

Amadou Diop, perhaps most famous on Muhlenberg's campus as 'Awa's husband,' assumed the role of assistant tennis coach last fall season. Over the last year, the Mules have developed as a team under the guidance of Diop, in addition to Head Coach David DeLaCasas Kurvink and Assistant Coach Jess Ament. Diop brings an extensive knowledge of the game to the team, and a wealth of fascinating life experiences. Diop was first connected to Muhlenberg while serving as the director of the international program at Rodale Institute. He gave lectures for the biology and French departments at Muhlenberg on his areas of agricultural expertise and sustainable development. His resume includes two master's degrees and a Ph.D., in addition to an honorary doctorate from Muhlenberg, issued in 2003. He is pentalingual with the ability to speak English, Wolof, French, Russian and Spanish.

Diop began his life in Saint Louis, Senegal, located on the Atlantic Ocean. Diop recalls the movement for independence in Senegal, including riots in his home city leading up to the eventual independence in 1960. Family is, and has always been, very important to him, as his parents and grandparents were great influences on him. His father was well educated and worked for the ministry of finance.

He began his extensive education in Saint Louis, Senegal in 1971. Wolof is his native language but he learned French, Spanish, and English while studying in Senegal. Frustrated with the sometimes months-long education strikes while at the University of Senegal, he applied for and was accepted into a program in the Kuban region of Russia where he spent a total of six years, two of which were spent attaining his first master's degree. He spent some time at Georgetown University participating in a research program, and from 1980-1982 he earned his second master's in soil science in the Philippines. He began his Ph.D. program at Oregon State University in 1984 and finished in 1988.

He began playing tennis in 1978, which he did against a wall for two years without any coach. His game improved while in the Philippines and more so once he reached the United States. He spent two years in Nigeria doing research and was number one at the local tennis club. Finally, in 1996, Diop settled in his current home here in the Lehigh Valley where he began to get involved in tennis locally. He joined the United States Tennis Association (USTA) in 1996 and began playing at a 3.5 team, and later a 4.0 and 4.5 team.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS

Coach Amadou Diop and the men's tennis team at their match against Moravian University.

When initially filling out the paperwork for applying to the USTA team, they rated him a 2.0 due to his lack of high school and collegiate playing experience. However, this was appealed and his 3.5 teammates all recognized that Diop was better than them. He played at these levels for several years and began coaching in the 2000s following his certification and attendance at USTA seminars.

As a player, his table tennis skill influenced his early game and he has always had a love for drop shots. Perhaps most interesting about his tennis game is the fact that nearly all of it was attained without professional coaching and instead through extensive playing and skill. His wealth of knowledge about the game comes from hard work and dedication. This is noted by Josh Beson '24 who states, "Amadou adds a voice of wisdom to the tennis team. He has played tennis for a long time and thus knows the game very well. As a coach, Amadou gives us ways to improve our game in a supportive fashion as well as a kind leader who is understanding when we make mistakes."

Diop's coaching brilliance on the court is matched with his compassionate mentoring off of the court. Tennis is known to be an incredibly frustrating sport; yet, Diop is described by Benson as a "calming presence." Benson goes on to say "The whole team is very committed and he knows that. It is nice that instead of being a coach that yells or gets worked up, he is supportive and understanding. After talking with him, I feel like I can fix my mistakes easily." Teammates echo Benson's gratitude for Diop's presence with Sophia Framm '24 stating that "Coach Diop brings experience and instills confidence in us, as players through his focus on consistency and goal-setting." Stefanie Wolff '24 added that as a coach, "Amadou adds

a positive energy and light to the team. If any of us are having a bad day, as soon as we say 'hi coach' he just smiles at us and we feel a lot more at ease at practice and about life."

In addition to coaching and playing, his passion for the game extends to watching and attending professional tennis matches. He has attended the U.S. Open at least 10 times and his favorite tennis players of all time include Pete Sampras, John McEnroe and Rafael Nadal. A highlight of Diop's tennis career is the coaching of his daughter, Aida, who went on to play at Bloomsburg University. Diop also loves attending to his garden where

he grows a diversity of crops. He has also amassed a collection of over 40 spoons from many of the countries he has visited. Diop hopes to one day open a tennis club in Senegal and is currently working on achieving this. When asked what life advice he would give young people, Amadou said "Keep your word, be truthful and always be timely."

**"Keep your word, be truthful and always be timely."**





# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## The possibility of reaching full potential

*Division III rules have questionable effects on Muhlenberg student-athletes*

By EVAN SCHLOTTERBECK  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

A non-traditional season for an NCAA Division III athletic team is five weeks long; 15 practices and one day of competition. Combine that with the three-to-four-month official season and teams are left with at least seven months of the off-season during which they are not training or playing together. Can teams that only get to play together, under NCAA rules, for a maximum of five months out of the year reach their full potential on the field or court?

According to a recent email from Megan Patruno, associate athletic director at Muhlenberg, “Division III student-athletes should be instructed that captain’s practices outside the declared playing season or on a required day off are impermissible.”

“This rule is really meant to protect the student-athletes,” said Patruno. “Health and safety is a top priority. Muhlenberg student-athletes are competitive and are always looking for ways to improve their skills, and I believe this rule is in place to cushion them from overworking.”

Although the rule may center around preventing mental and physical burnout, it takes a certain passion for the game to reach the collegiate level. For some student-athletes, their focus lies heavily on their sport.

“We should be able to hold captain’s practices,” said Ethan Beyer ’25, a member of the Muhlenberg men’s soccer team. “They are great opportunities to bond with each other, work on our game and just get to know each other better... going to soccer practices and playing games is something we hold dear in our lives, and we want to play as much as we can.”

“One month really isn’t enough,” adds Rachel Saxton ’25, a guard for the Muhlenberg women’s basketball team. “I think we need more structure when it comes to actually playing because it’s not enough to play for a month and then jump into our season just like that.”

Part of the advertised benefit of Division III athletics is the freedom and abil-



PHOTO BY RACHEL SAXTON

Muhlenberg women’s basketball team playing a pick-up game during their non-traditional season in Memorial Hall on Sept. 21, 2022

ity to pursue loads of extracurricular and academic interests while being an athlete, something this rule promotes. By regulating off-season captain’s practices for DIII teams, the NCAA is eliminating the weight on student-athletes to attend workouts outside of their playing season, allowing them to attend job interviews or present research without missing practice or matches.

“It’s nice that the rule makes things really clear cut,” said Professor of Mathematics Elyn Rykken. “It takes the choice and pressure off of the student-athlete and says look, you gave your all when you were in season, and now you can take a role in a play or pursue an internship... it allows you to be a more well-rounded participant in the Muhlenberg community.”

“Time off can be a good thing,” commented first baseman of Muhlenberg’s 2022 conference champion softball team, Kaitlyn Buurman ’25. “Division III allows student-athletes to recognize that they can focus on their schoolwork or clubs frequently, for example. Putting the time and effort into your sport is going to make all the difference, yes, but the privilege of having the ability to focus on other aspects of your life is important.”

Some important aspects of a student-athlete’s life consist of academics and

their physical well-being.

“I think the rule makes sense within the framework of the Division III philosophy of balancing academics with athletics,” said athletic trainer Sean Morse. “From an athletic training perspective, it also helps to reduce the likelihood of injuries—either during the season or when sports are out of season.”

Aside from performance and skill, another crucial part of team success is chemistry and how well a team meshes on the field or court. If teams are only together for one-third of the year, they have minimal time to gel with the teammates they go to battle with every game.

“On the court, [the rule] definitely affects team chemistry,” said Saxton. “We need more time because it’s not enough just to go on the court three times a week for one month and play with each other. I believe that you have to do more of not just play, but you have to actually learn everyone’s strengths and weaknesses and build upon those.”

This rule can be viewed from many different lenses, for better or worse, but regardless of which lens you use, it is a challenge teams work to overcome every season. “I think we definitely can overcome the challenges,” explained Saxton. “As a team, we have to say, ‘Hey, listen, if

we want to be successful, and if we want to win a championship, we can’t just come in every day and go through the motions.’ Whether it’s playing pick-up for an hour or getting a lift in late at night, we have to take advantage of every opportunity we have as a collective unit because that is all we have in our control. To be successful you have to be really determined and genuinely want to put in work, even if the time to do so may be limited.”

“Whenever we can practice, everyone is giving the effort needed to meet the standard we set for ourselves,” commented Buurman. “If we see someone having a tough day, we pick them up and encourage them to give 100 percent of what they have that day, which might look a little different from person to person.”

From a team cohesion standpoint, upperclassmen leadership takes center stage for teams conquering this adversity.

“Last year, our seniors were good role models and let us know they were always there for us,” said Buurman. “If we needed anything when it came to schoolwork, or just needing someone to talk to, our upperclassmen were there. Now we have to carry that on, instill within this new team that we’re all human and each of us is a resource that can offer support, but might need support themselves another day.”

The goal of every team is to win, and this rule directly affects teams’ capacity to give themselves the best chance to end the year with hardware. An equally essential aspect of this rule’s impact, though, is positive, as it allows student-athletes to flourish in an atmosphere different from their sport and escape their comfort zones.

“Every student has to know themselves and their own limits,” said Patruno. “It’s up to them to use their time in the off-season wisely to engage in other parts of campus life while also preparing for their upcoming seasons. This responsibility is why being a student-athlete is so challenging yet rewarding.”

So, should this rule be revisited? Should it be left alone? Opinions vary, but ‘Berg student-athletes are still chasing victory just as hard.

Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Oct. 13 - Oct. 19

### Football



Sun., Oct. 16 @ 2:00 p.m.  
Scotty Wood Stadium

### Volleyball



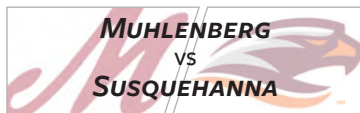
Sat., Oct. 15 @ 12:00 p.m.  
Johns Hopkins

### Men’s Soccer



Wed., Oct. 19 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Ursinus

### Women’s Soccer



Wed., Oct. 19 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Varsity Field





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## NEWS

Muhlenberg Academic Review gets ready for publication.

[read more on page 3](#)



## ARTS & CULTURE

The Noche de Cultura Gala celebrates Hispanic Heritage month.

[read more on page 6](#)



## OP/ED

Hope Biddle '24 shares a poem.

[read more on page 8](#)



## SPORTS

Sibling athletes tackle 'Berg together.

[read more on page 11](#)



# RANKING SCAM ROCKS COLLEGES

## *The College drops nine spots in US News rankings*

BY MATTHEW KLINGER  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Every August, the US News and World Report releases its annual ranking of both national universities and liberal arts colleges in the United States. This year, Muhlenberg fell nine spots to 76th on the US News list after being 67th the year prior. While Muhlenberg has fluctuated in the rankings over the last couple of years, coming in at 72nd two years prior, the recent drop in enrollment raises some questions about the new ranking. This drop may not necessarily be a sign of decline at Muhlenberg; part of this drop is a result of skewed and inconsistent metrics within the college ranking system. For example, the University of Washington fell to 7th from 6th among global universities on the US News website while simultaneously dropping to 55th from 50th among national universities. These inconsistencies demonstrate the complex and seemingly arbitrary calculations used when determining how well a school ranks.

On their website, the US News and World Report details that they calculate "10 distinct overall rankings" based on the colleges' academic missions. Then, for each ranking, "the sum of weighted, normalized values



Photo by Keanna Peña '25

across 17 indicators of academic quality determine each school's overall score and, by extension, its overall rank." The rankings are based on the following metrics: graduation and retention rates, social mobility, graduation rate performance, undergraduate academic reputation, faculty resources, student selectivity, financial resources per student, average alumni giving rate and graduate indebtedness. While a lot of data is needed to rate the schools according to those metrics, US News does not rely on external data sources, and rather obtains the data straight from the colleges based on their

figures submitted in a series of surveys sent to the school for the rankings. They also obtain data from the Common Data Set (CDS), a survey program where schools report directly to the data set rather than US News magazine. However, the CDS also relies on self-reported data.

The use of self-reported data has a number of flaws, chief of which is that it is hard to verify the accuracy of the data. One of the main examples of this is the recent Columbia University data scandal. In Feb. 2022, Michael Thaddeus, Ph.D., published an analysis of Columbia's reported statistics, and refuted a number

of key metrics, concluding that the reported class sizes were an underestimate, the number of professors who achieved the highest degree in their field was lower than reported, and that the spending per pupil was inflated through the addition of erroneous costs. As a result of the scandal, US News moved Columbia down 16 spots. It is likely that Columbia is not the only school to have inflated its numbers, threatening the veracity of the rankings and demonstrating the ranking's inability to accurately assess the quality of

[SEE SCAM PAGE 4](#)

# Campus Living Room Project initiated

BY HARRY GLICKIN  
LAYOUT EDITOR

Last week, "Some Unusual Responses to the Rise of Nazism" was at the forefront of Marc B. Shapiro's, Ph.D., talk at The Leffell Center, which was followed by the second Campus Living Room Project chat of the semester. Shapiro gave voice to a somewhat controversial, hard to hear, yet current Holocaust conversation on the history of this dictator-led genocide and its relevance to the politics of

today. This topic and many more like it, though important to be discussed, require more communal support in regard to their intensity. Such topics are why Muhlenberg formed the Campus Living Room Project, which seeks to bring together members of the community with varying perspectives, to create a safe space for reflection, commentary and togetherness directly following events and religious holidays on campus.

According to Dean of Students Allison Williams, this ini-

tiative has been in the works by members of the faculty for roughly a year before deciding to kick it off this semester. "We thought about waiting until it was just perfect to launch, but then we felt we can adjust it, grow it and mold it with students as we go, so let's just start the conversations!"

The project is designed to be a safe space for all students and faculty. When commenting on the name given to this series, Williams stated that "[living rooms] are places that are in-

tended to feel comfortable and safe and yet have unwritten rules promoting controversy with civility, reparation of harm and an understanding of and empathy toward the human condition." It is important for all people involved to feel valued and included in this dialogue, and in some ways, it may have different meanings for different people. Though these topics may be complex, Williams argues that it is important that people

[SEE LIVING ROOM PAGE 4](#)



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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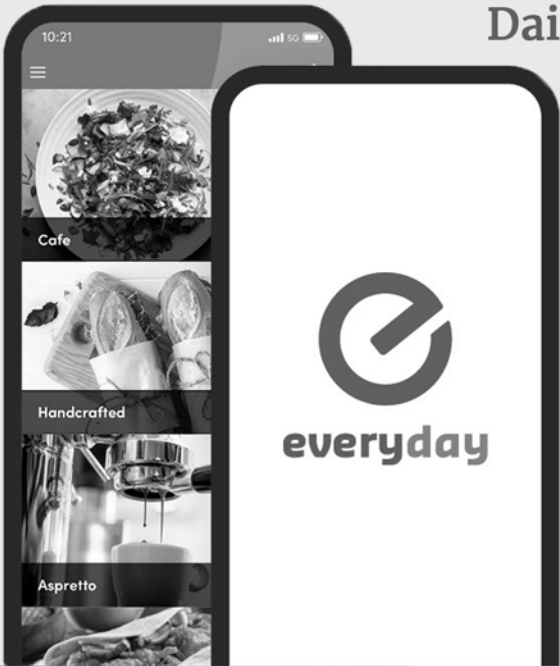
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# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

10/10/2022 Liberty & 25th Streets: Point of information report, neighbor spoken to, no further incident. Soccer Field: Report of suspicious odor, area checked, nothing could be noted. Martin Luther Hall: Report of theft of bicycle, investigation to continue.	of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, individual refused further treatment or transport.
10/11/2022 East Hall: Report of found charger, unknown to whom item belongs, charger placed in lost and found locker. Turner Street: Report of injured student, student transported to Health Center by Campus Safety Officer.	10/14/2022 Chew Street: Report of fire alarm from smoke from candle, system silenced and reset. Trumbower: Report of found ipad, owner later claimed item.
10/12/2022 Martin Luther Hall: Report of fire alarm from steam from shower, system could not be reset, Johnson Controls was notified to respond, no further incident. Martin Luther Hall: Report of sick student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student refused further treatment or transport. Martin Luther Hall: Report of damage to gate surrounding trash bins, investigation to continue. Tilghman Street: Report of fire alarm, upon arrival no cause could be found, system silenced and reset.	10/15/2022 Haas College Center: Report of individuals in building after hours, individuals later identified and spoken to. Walz Hall: Report to locate student, contact made, no further incident. Prosser Hall: Report of sick student, individual spoken to, no further incident. Chew Street (2100 BLK): Report to assist with disabled rental vehicle, Campus Safety Officer was unable to assist getting the vehicle in reverse. Gordon Street: Report of damage to vehicle, broken window and dents, caused by fallen branches, owner notified. Leh Street: Report of fire alarm, upon arrival no cause could be found, system silenced and reset. Prosser Hall: Report of harassment, individuals spoken to, no further incident at this time.
10/13/2022 South Hall: Report of fire alarm from accidental pull of pull station, system silenced and reset. Egner Memorial Chapel: Report	10/16/2022 Seegers Union: Report of found phone, unknown to whom item belongs, phone placed in lost and found locker.

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# GOT ISSUES?

## *BergVotes hosts Issues Expo to educate on political stances*

BY CYDNEY WILSON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The midterm elections are quickly approaching, and Muhlenberg students are gearing up to cast their vote on Nov. 8. In advance of the upcoming voter registration deadline on Oct. 24, BergVotes hosted an Issues Expo, which “is a way for student organizations to present candidate stances on current event topics that students care about. BergVotes is hosting this event as a way to inform students so they can vote for the candidates that most align with their values,” shared BergVotes Vice President Ashley Pasettiner ‘23.

The first Issues Expo happened in 2016 in the lead-up to the presidential election, followed by the second one in 2018. Planning for the third Issues Expo commenced in the spring of 2020, right before the COVID-19 pandemic took hold, and was delayed until this fall, when it finally happened on Oct. 17.

Former BergVotes Presidents Kyle Ropski ‘22 and Ryan Abrams ‘23 were both able to attend the event and expressed their excitement that the Issues Expo was finally happening.

Ropski said, “Being an informed and educated voter is one of the most important parts of the democratic process. I am so thankful to BergVotes and Beth Halpern for their tireless efforts to make this event happen.”



Members of the Berg Weekly, Harry Glicklin ‘26, Matthew Baresh ‘25, and Cydney Wilson ‘23, table at the Issues Expo.

Abrams added, “After years of discussion about the event, it’s exciting to see it come to life.”

Members of various student organizations shared the reason why their group decided to have a table.

Harli Strauss-Cohn ‘24, Environmental Action Team (enACT) board member, shared “enACT had a table at the Issues Expo because we believe the environment, sustainability and justice needs to be considered in all avenues of life and

voting. We were tabling on the candidates’ stances on the environment.”

Gabriella Oteri ‘23 shared, “The Feminist Collective decided to talk about education at our table. We take an intersectional approach in the work that we do. So, we went with education because we thought that there [were] a lot of important issues to cover related to our topic.”

Planned Parenthood Generation, a newer student organization, also had a table at the Issues Expo. Emily Orlich ‘24

shared the importance of this “especially after Roe v. Wade was overturned.” Orlich added, “Abortion access is really important because it’s a very divided issue in Pennsylvania, and this election will most likely determine whether or not you will be able to get abortions in Pennsylvania.”

BergVotes President Rebecca Salkin ‘24 shared, “Our goal is for students to walk out of the Event Space and know just a little bit more about the candidates and who they might vote for.”

This goal seems to have been achieved, and Muhlenberg students, particularly first-years, feel more prepared heading into November.

“Considering that Muhlenberg students come from several different states, I thought that the Expo was educational because we were able to learn about the political candidates of our new home, which I was previously completely oblivious [to],” shared Megan Hansen ‘26. “Now, I can confidently vote in Pennsylvania.”

Sabeen Safi ‘26 echoed this sentiment, saying, “Seeing all the candidate’s stances on a variety of important issues really put into perspective why voting matters. It’s about choosing a voice that you want to speak for you and what you stand for. I am glad I went because confusing topics became easier to understand, helping me feel more confident in who I will be voting for this November.”

## Student-run journal MAR gears up for publication

BY SAMANTHA TEMPKIN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Muhlenberg Academic Review (MAR) is a peer-reviewed journal featuring the written works of Muhlenberg undergraduate students, including academic essays that cover a variety of disciplines and subjects. The journal is founded, edited and published by Muhlenberg’s Gamma Iota chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the English honor society.

“Muhlenberg’s chapter of Sigma Tau Delta began in 1963, but in 1993, the chapter temporarily disbanded. I restarted the chapter, and I asked our first group of students to decide on some kind of project that could create identity and focus for us,” says Associate Professor of English Linda Miller, the faculty advisor for the MAR. She continues, “The students decided that they wanted to start an interdisciplinary academic journal. Our first MAR journal was published in Spring 2018 and we have published a Spring edition every year since then.”

This year, the journal is under the direction of Co-Editors-In-Chief Faith Maldonado ‘23 and Lily Magoon ‘24. Maldonado raves about what she describes as the “intellectual richness” of the MAR, stating that it “is an emblem of the liberal arts education, where voices from different areas of study are put into conversation with each other, and the threads that

connect these wildly different papers are so interesting to notice! Last year’s edition of MAR, for example, had essays from all different disciplines—from public health, to economics, to theatre, to art history—but you’ll notice each of the papers are similarly concerned with assumptions of different societies, and they challenge readers to critique their own mindsets and greater social structures.”

Magoon, who was offered positions in the English honor society and the MAR last year, expresses similar ideas as well as excitement for her first year as part of the MAR team: “It’s kind of hard to find

places for academic writing to be published, so it’s a great opportunity for that, especially for those considering going to grad[uate] school or post-grad[uate] degrees in general... I’m really excited, I haven’t worked on this side of publishing things before, so it’s gonna be really fun.”

The co-editors-in-chief are responsible for interacting with the potential writers and determining the finalists. After receiving submissions, which are all made anonymous and numbered, Maldonado and Magoon assign the essays to their team of contributing editors, who span across several disciplines. They are re-

sponsible for reviewing the works they receive based on their knowledge within their departments. Assistant Professor of Anthropology Casey Miller, Ph.D, mentions, “Each essay is read by three students, two in the essay’s discipline and one by a reader outside the essay’s discipline,” while Maldonado identifies “originality, clarity, grammar” and more as some of the key criteria these readers look for.

When all essays have been read and reviewed, the co-editors-in-chief go over the essays and the scores they received from the contributing editors to decide on the finalists. The selected works will then be sent to Copy Editors and Senior Editors, Oyinkansola Adebajo ‘24 and Anna Bobok ‘23, who proofread and suggest changes to the authors. When the essays are finalized, Layout Editors Grace Alvarado ‘23 and Rebecca Zipper ‘23 format the journal and it is published. Also on the team this year are Co-Social Media and Business Managers Zev Lonner ‘24 and Peyton Sloan ‘23, who are currently working to advertise the MAR and encourage students to submit work through fundraisers, online posts, and more.

Sloan was very aware of how many essays were submitted to the MAR based on her work as a copy editor, which made



Students like Shinam Hussain ‘25, Paige Weisburg ‘22, and Marissa Scharf ‘24 are encouraged to submit their academic pieces to MAR.

SEE MAR PAGE 4



## FROM SCAM PAGE 1

an institution.

The Weekly spoke to both President Kathleen Haring, Ph.D., and the Office of Communications about the drop; the Dean of Students Allison Williams declined to comment.

When asked why the College fell in the rankings, Haring said that “Muhlenberg’s overall score in the U.S. News rankings remained the same as in 2021—at 63—however, because of a number of ties and movements above and below us in the rankings, our overall ranking decreased from 67 to 76 in the National Liberal Arts Colleges category.” In addition, Haring noted that the drop in ranking is not an accurate reflection of how the College is actually performing, saying, “The actual student experience at Muhlenberg, both academically and co-curricularly, is stronger than ever. This year, US News recognized us for the first time as one

of the nation’s most innovative colleges, ranking #51 for innovation among National Liberal Arts Colleges.” When looking into the individual metrics that make up the overall score, Haring also noted that Muhlenberg actually improved in a number of categories, including affordability where the College “improved 10 points on the best value ranking to No. 62, up from No. 72.” The last and perhaps most important thing that Haring stated was that US News is not the only college ranking, and that other lists such as Niche rank Muhlenberg 4th in PA for communications, 9th in PA for accounting and finance, 50th in the nation for the performing arts and 1st in PA and 10th in the nation for dining.

Meg Ryan, vice president for enrollment management, also provided insight into the impact of the College’s US News ranking drop, stating that, “There’s a

general consensus that rankings such as US News and World Report are not the most important influence on the admissions process... a higher rank in USNWR does not necessarily correlate with more applications or larger first-year classes.” Ryan also detailed the flaws of relying on college rankings such as US News saying, “The Muhlenberg experience is so much more than the numbers. The Office of Admissions focuses our recruitment efforts around telling the full story of the transformative Muhlenberg education.” Numbers cannot accurately reflect a student’s experience and the full breadth of opportunities that a college can offer, and while rankings can be helpful when used as a guide, to use them as the sole determiner for choosing a school means missing out on a lot of other potential schools.

In addition to informing current and prospective students, rankings are also

valuable for the College to be able to assess itself. Bill Keller, senior director of the Office of Communications, stated that “Rankings are one of many factors the College considers... we [also] query seniors each year and the results confirm that our students are engaged in a profound, life-changing education that immerses them in experiential learning opportunities and enables them to chart a course to achieve their goals. These findings help inform our marketing and outreach efforts to tell the Muhlenberg story far and wide.”

## FROM LIVING ROOM PAGE 1

feel comfortable having discussions like these, to build their understanding of others, learn from experiences that may differ from their own and share their perspectives with a welcoming group.

The Campus Living Room Project has held two discussions thus far. The first one, held on Yom Kippur, focused on belonging, where the group shared their thoughts on what it means to belong on college campuses, in student groups, and in the greater global community. Not only did the group provide insight into their own personal experiences, they also explored the ways in which a sense of belonging can be created for others, both on and off campus.

The conversation post-Shapiro’s event was headed up by Hillel Director Ira Blum ’10. Blum opened the floor to dialogue

regarding what folks can learn from past historical events, and how these ideas can help tackle today’s challenges.

“It opened my eyes to a new viewpoint,” said Nolan Eichorn ’26 upon attending the discussion. He also commented that as a non-Jewish attendee, it was a beneficial learning opportunity, and a “valuable experience [that has] allowed me to understand an important part of history from a new perspective.”

The goal of this project appears to be that people will come to expect discussions and be open and ready for them after events. Williams reflected this, stating that in the foundation of this initiative “student groups can propose and lead topics of discourse or they can join faculty or staff-led conversations from time to time. As events unfold across the globe, this project also aims to create a space that students naturally seek out and

convene for discussion, difficult dialogue and as space in which harm can be repaired within and among communities.”

On Oct. 18 The Campus Living Room Project held a discussion as follow-up for Muhlenberg’s recent production of “We Are Proud to Present a Presentation About the Herero of Namibia, Formerly Known as Southwest Africa, From the German Südwestafrika, Between the Years 1884–1915,” with this discussion open to Black students, faculty and staff and a second discussion on Oct. 24 second open to all members of the College community. Everyone is encouraged to attend one or both of these sessions as they see fit.



PHOTO BY NOAH BERGER '24

Students listen to a lecture facilitated by the new Campus Living Room project - the project aims to create a safe space for reflection and important conversation.

## FROM MAR PAGE 3

getting published to the journal that year even more meaningful. “It felt very, very rewarding, and totally a redemption story,” she says, referring to how getting accepted into the MAR lifted her spirits after the same essay was rejected from the Sigma Tau Delta Conference. She continues, “Submit work that you’re proud of. Say if you submitted it before like I did and you didn’t get the results you wanted, but you still feel strongly that it is a good piece of work, submit it... be confident in your work.”

The Muhlenberg Academic Review is very selective, as it published 11 essays out of 70 submissions last year, but the MAR team affirms that this should not stop students from submitting their work. Magoon says, “I think people don’t tend to take advantage of the opportunity because they think their writing isn’t good enough for it, and that’s very rarely the case and should never be a reason you’re not submitting to something... if we’re trying to showcase the writing of Muhlenberg, then you’re here, you should be submitting your

writing.”

For those who wish to have work published in the MAR, Maldonado and Magoon recommend reading through archived editions on their website for a sense of the skill level, sharing writing and asking for feedback, going to the Writing Center (where both editors and other members of the team work) and writing in a style that communicates the author’s genuine excitement about the topic and pride in their work. Submissions for the next edition of MAR are due on Monday, Feb. 6, 2023. Visit <https://mar.bergbuilds.domains> for more information.

Maldonado summarizes the impact and importance of this academic journal saying, “MAR is one of the most intelligent displays of diversity of thought at our school. It’s a microcosm of intellectual discourse, and in reading our peers’ well-researched and articulated contributions to their fields of study, we’re encouraged to engage deeper in our own academic pursuits.”

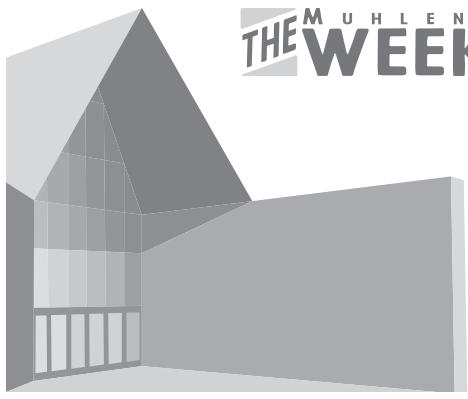
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THE MUHLENBERG  
WEEKLY

# ARTS & CULTURE

"When you relinquish the desire to control your future,  
you can have more happiness."  
- Nicole Kidman

## Arts Marathon returns to Parents Plaza

By ALMARAH URMAN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On Oct. 14 at 3 p.m. in Parents Plaza, the Muhlenberg Theatre Association (MTA) kicked off its yearly Arts Marathon event, taking over the space for 12 hours to share art and raise money for this year's charity of choice, Homies Helping Homies. As in years past, the time was filled with incredible student performances as well as providing student artisans and small business owners an opportunity to sell their work, all for a good cause.

"When I had to pick an organization that I wanted to fundraise for, I really wanted to pick something that would be closer to the campus, something that not as many people know about, a group that deserves even more love and probably doesn't often get as much as some other groups in terms of publicity and such," said Arts Marathon Coordinator Jolie Lanning '25.

Homies Helping Homies is a mutual aid group located in the Point Breeze neighborhood of South Philadelphia, a neighborhood that has the highest concentration of Black elders compared to any other neighborhood in Philadelphia. They have faced overpopulation and gentrification issues that were only exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and Homies Helping Homies works to ensure that everyone has what they need.

"I came into the process of it later and



PHOTO BY ZOE FELDER '26

it's kind of been a whirlwind just trying to make it work for all of our performers but I'm excited that it's finally here," said Faith Miller '26, one of Lanning's assistants, during the first part of the event.

The early hours of the Arts Marathon were dedicated mostly to the student vendors, with the performances kicking off at 4:20 p.m. with "A 'Glee' Fan Game Show," a Glee-themed guessing game that brought out many an audience member's inner "gleek."

At around 5 p.m. some incredible student dance group performed. Copacetic Rhythms, Perkulators, and MINT all brought their talent to the stage for a good cause. The rest of the afternoon and early evening was filled with a play read-

ing and some planned-out writing, dance

and musical performances, as well as an open-mic and karaoke segment where students could donate for the opportunity to get on stage and present anything their heart desired. This led to both some fantastic vocals and some fear-inducing, stunt-filled dance moves.

"I think things are going great, it seems like everyone is having a fabulous night. I'm very excited for all of the performers and I'm hoping we're going to raise a lot of money, but no matter what, everyone's having a lot of fun and I'm glad!" said Lanning at this point in the event.

At 11 p.m. the a cappella marathon featured all six a cappella groups in a competition to see who could raise the most

money. All of the groups brought their a-game, auctioning off some incredible items like a date with a 'Fella from the Acafellas, the opportunity to be personally serenaded by the Chaimonics, and votes on which color Noteworthy President Brayden Stallman '23, would dye his hair during their second song. In the end, CODA raised the most money out of all the groups, winning a Blues-Clues-themed prize cup.

"Two people pooled their money to win the auction, and chose me for the date, which was super cool," stated Harry Glicklin '26, a 'Fella "We also helped raise money by allowing the highest bidder to change a lyric in one of our songs to put any name of their choice. It felt good to be a part of this fundraiser, and to have personally been able to help raise money for a good cause."

The a cappella and other vocal groups were followed up by comedy shows from Muhlenberg Improv Association (MIA), To Be Determined (TBD) and a Fun With Science and D.I.E. crossover, all of whom auctioned off opportunities to get involved in the silliness. The late hour of the morning only added to the hilarity of the groups. The Co-President of D.I.E., Robin Title '25, with Lanning as Co-President, shared, "I thought the event went really well!! A 12 hour long event is a lot to plan and I thought that Jolie did so well organizing everything!!" After that, the last few performers overcame exhaustion and

SEE **MARATHON** PAGE 7

## Fred Moten on sociology and Black voices

By AMY SWARTZ  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As part of their programming on Speculative Futures, the Center for Ethics held a lecture on Oct. 11, given by Fred Moten, Ph.D, titled "Notes on Dis place/meant." Fred Moten is currently a professor at New York University Tisch School of the Arts, where his teachings focus on critical theory, Black studies and performance studies. He attended Harvard University and the University of California, Berkeley and has taught at multiple universities across the nation. He is a writer and poet, with his works concentrating on sound, voice and Black culture and experiences.

Moten's lecture covered a variety of different subjects, though they were all intertwined by an overarching theme of sociology and its effect on Black voices. He began his talk by reading from one of his most recent works, where he de-

scribed sociology as both "a saving grace" or a "genocidal tool" for Black people. Moten discussed how sociology is often-times used to give wrong reasoning to why there is urban unrest in Black communities, citing more matriarchal homes paired with broken family structures. This untrue sociological evidence leads to public policies being enacted, furthering false stereotypes about the Black community, turning sociology into this "genocidal tool" Moten makes a point of. He also calls to issue the topic of seeing and naming, as it is part of a fundamental structure of oppression. Seeing and naming everything possible can only turn into only focusing on what needs to be improved. This need for improvement often gets traced back to people who are struggling, and putting them at fault, further upholding a stigma against those who are poverty-stricken. Moten asks his audience, "Is there a way to reconfigure seeing and naming in this world?" He al-

lows for his listeners to develop their own opinions, while eventually giving his own perspective. He believes that "if there is a way, it has to be a way that isn't looking at, rather looking with, from seeing to, to seeing with," signaling that much progress must be made in order for these human-made labels to become beneficial. Moten's lecture left his audience with new understandings of the role that social science fields play in upholding biases against marginalized groups.

When asked about her thoughts on the lecture, Iris Jordan '26, stated "I found it very interesting how he is a performance studies professor, but talked more about sociology than anything else. It's very interesting as a prospective theatre major and sociology minor." Julian Chapparo '26, has a similar outlook, stating that "it was interesting how he related physics and sociology, and that there's an intersection between the two, which I had never considered before." Moten's lec-

ture emphasized the importance of recognizing how multiple different fields can intersect and overlap, and share similarities. For instance, he discussed the theme of entanglement through the ideas of both Einstein and DuBois, in physics and sociology. These intersections into multiple fields resonated with many students at the event, as their fields of study were contextualized in Moten's main themes.

Then, on the afternoon of Oct. 12, Moten held a writing workshop focused on listening to songs he found to be influential to "retro-speculation." One of the songs played and discussed was "Little Ghetto Boy," by Donny Hathaway. Moten talked about the importance of the song's overarching theme of leaving home, and how in the 1960s and 1970s this was crucial to urban Black communities, as it was often encouraged to leave home and be

SEE **MOTEN** PAGE 6



# The “Noche de Cultura” Gala

By SINHAYANA SRINIVASAN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The end of the Hispanic and Latine Heritage Month was celebrated with Muhlenberg’s Comunidad Latinx and QT-POCC (Queer and Trans People of Color Collective) coming together to organize the The Noche de Cultura Gala. Having taken place on Friday, Oct. 14, it was met with great success.

It took place in The Great Room in Seegers Union, and the entire hall was decorated beautifully to fit the theme of the festival. Red beaming lights lit up a small stage, which was placed in front of screens colored purple and pink. There were traditional foods, like empanadas, taquitos and churros, to add to the fervor of the cultural festival. Adrián Padrón-Curet ’26, an Emerging Leader, mentioned how “it was a good way of celebrating the end of Hispanic Heritage Month, where there was good food and performances.”

The Gala was filled with entertainment, with people putting on dance performances and singing songs. Performers showcased a beautiful spectacle with a mashup of songs. The crowd went wild for them, but the entertainment didn’t end there. “El Cantante,” a sweet Spanish song, was sung karaoke style, with people from the audience joining in song, and poems were recited by the passionate students, titled “Illegal Immigration” and “An Ode to my Immigrant Family,” which was previously published in The Weekly. They spoke powerful words, to convey heartfelt emotions that the poet



PHOTO BY SINHAYANA SRINIVASAN '26

felt about the current immigration situation, and to passionately express the difficult obstacles immigrants face everyday.

One of the highlights of the Gala was the guest speaker, Joela-Abiona Rivera. Referred to as “the new Sylvia Rivera,” she is a transgender Afro-Latine activist from Brooklyn, New York, and expressed how she was “glad she could meet people who were willing to listen to what [I] had to say.” She led the Stonewall Protest in 2020, and is an advocate for Black liberation and colorism in the Afro-Latine community. She spoke passionately about her work, and what she strives towards everyday. Unfortunately, she couldn’t join in-person, but she spoke through a Zoom video call, and the effect of her words

weren’t diminished in the slightest. She gave examples from her own life about how she faced racism in her family and society because of them being Black citizens in a Hispanic country. She left plenty of time for the viewers to ask questions, and many of which about her insights and education regarding these matters.

Giovanni Merrifield ’23, one of the co-leaders of the event, praised Rivera’s speech, saying, “She absolutely killed it! I felt she spoke with a lot of confidence and power, and I feel like she’s going to be a major change in this world.”

The Gala came to an end after that, and people were dancing and singing to the peppy music. A lot of effort and hard work was put into the event, and Maria Rivera

Students were able to spend a night celebrating Hispanic and Latine culture.

’23, another one of the co-leaders and the writer of “Ode to my Immigrant Family,” spoke about how “the planning of it was a bit stressful, but it was also really cool for people to come together to collaborate, and I think it turned out great. Even though it was stressful, the rewarding aspect of it was really cool!”

A lot of thought was put into it as well, and she further went on to mention how “We’ve been planning this for two to three weeks, and it unfolded before our very eyes. I also hope this starts more events like this in the future, and after the seniors are gone. We hope this continues after we graduate.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Fred Moten, Ph.D, speaks to students on Black voices in the context of sociology.

FROM **MOTEN** PAGE 5

successful elsewhere. Moten related this movement to his own life, as he recalled that he was sent to college as an opportunity to leave his current social situation, as well as to learn about what was wrong with it. He then contrasted this to plans of his current students, as many of them plan to move back to their hometowns and stay there after graduation. He attributes this to more comfortable and

affirming social situations at home, all of which give a new understanding of what it means to finally go back home.

This movement of staying at home that Moten attests to progress in communities, ties into the Center for Ethics’ theme of Speculative Futures. When asked about the importance of the theme, Mark Stein, the Center’s director, expressed that they “chose Speculative Futures because it seemed like a great idea that was helpful and forward looking.” More generally, Stein spoke on the goals of the Center by hosting events, such as Moten’s lecture. He stated that, “These sorts of events are important to the community for a number of reasons. They bring notable outside scholars and others to campus to share their ideas, work, and thoughts. These are great opportunities to engage with the ideas of the Center’s themes outside of the classroom.” Moten’s informative lecture and workshop undoubtedly helped the Center reach their goals, as it gave students an opportunity to learn about Black voices and sociology’s role in the external interpretation of others. He advised his student audience “You, as college students, should be focusing on how to make the already existing structures work a little better, not focusing on how to dismantle these structures,” leaving the Muhlenberg community with direction on how they can make a worthwhile influence.

## GIVEAWAY TIME!

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1

Take a photo of yourself in front of our mural holding your favorite Jay's Local beverage.

2

Post the photo to instagram with the hashtag #jayslocal3 Be sure to tag us and follow our account!

3

A winner will be chosen at random on October 31 and will win a \$30 Jay's Local Gift Card!



# Artist Spotlight: Madeline Burk '23



PHOTO COURTESY OF MADELINE BURKE '23

Madeline showcasing her acting skills in the Red Door.

BY DANNY MILKIS  
CO-A&C EDITOR

Madeline Burk '23 has been heavily involved with the theatre and dance department at Muhlenberg, having taken part in productions and studio courses

Opera," a complex character brought into a world of rampant crime and constant uncertainty.

"[Polly] lives in a world where women are not respected for the work that they do, but women are often the driving force for a lot of the things that happen," explained Burk. "It's so deeply frustrating for her because she has been sort of confining this life with her parents for all her life since she was a child. She finds a way out of it, where she can become a person in a position of power, and where she can get the respect that she's always craved."

"The Threepenny Opera," a musical drama in three acts with a book by Bertolt Brecht and Elizabeth Hauptmann and music by Kurt Weill, will be premiering in the Paul C. Empie Theatre on Friday, Oct. 28. The show features direction by Theatre Department Chair James (Jim) Peck, Ph.D., musical direction by staff accompanist Vincent Trovato and choreography by Professor of Dance Samuel Antonio Reyes.

"Jim is so incredibly knowledgeable, and as he so often says, he's directed plays before, which is clearly very true," says Burk. "Vinny, Sammy and Jim are also specific in the work that they do, and they want us to do it because the show has to be so specific for it to make complete sense. Specificity is such an important part of the show in terms of the movement and vocal work and getting all the little notes right, and making sure that it

all fits in with the story and the three of them together. [This] is [a] tough thing to do with an old show that's translated from German, and they do it so well."

When asked about the highlight of her time on campus so far as a senior, Burk replied that the compounded skill sets she has developed have enriched her coursework this semester.

Burk explained, "This year, I'm fortunate enough to be taking a directing class, as well as a solo performance class, both [of] which allow me to create a lot of performances, and make just odd wacky things and make these big mistakes that, in high school, we weren't allowed to make and up until relatively recently, I felt like I couldn't make and having that realization that I don't need to be perfect, and I really shouldn't be perfect as an artist, has been really freeing."

What awaits Burk after leaving the Muhlen-bubble? She says she is looking forward to exploring a number of possibilities as an artist and as a human.

"I want to figure out what it means to be a person while making art," says Burk. "Then maybe, hopefully, someday make money for theatre in some way, shape or form. My favorite answer to give to adults is I'm going to take a gap [year] and then go to grad[uate] school, which isn't entirely untrue. I do want to go to grad[uate] school at some point but right off the bat, I want to live. You can't make good art without living."

## FROM **MARATHON** PAGE 5

the cold to put on their shows and wrap up Arts Marathon with a bang.

Lauren Koranda '23, who performed a duet from "La La Land" with Joey Maracchi '23 said, "What made it so special my freshman year were performances where friends had fun that happened to also be entertaining. I'm really happy that I got to have fun and wow the fans with Joey as a senior!"

Overall, the event raised over \$950 for Homies Helping Homies through all the vendor sales, performer auctions and donations. The money raised will make an impact not too far away from Muhlenberg's own campus.

Greg Wilson '24, who performed in the kazoo concert, mentioned, "I had a great time at Arts Marathon! I wanted to do something funky, I got an ad for 42 Kazoos on Oriental Trading [Company] and I decided then and there. We didn't know what we were going to perform until we got there, but being dumb on stage with your friends while the audience cheers is what life is all about."

## beauty tips

*to feel and look good*

BY VALERIE KUSNER  
STAFF WRITER

As college students, it's sometimes difficult to stop our busy schedules and think about doing things that make us feel good. There are many student discounts on spa treatments provided by Muhlenberg that get unused by students. I have compiled a list of five beauty and nail salons in the Allentown area that are affordable and great.

1. Empire Beauty School (50-70 percent off if you show your Muhlenberg ID)

Perfect for anyone looking to get an inexpensive blowout (\$7 for Muhlenberg students) for formals, graduation photos or any event you might have on campus. The salon is very clean and the staff is extremely professional and friendly. I would highly recommend it!

1634 MacArthur Rd, Whitehall, PA 18052

2. Advanced Massage Therapy & Wellness (15 percent off if you show your Muhlenberg ID)

An amazing spot to relieve some tension and stress, especially after a big test. The most popular massage: The Healing Touch (\$80.75 for Muhlenberg students)

is an hour-long massage in which the masseuse uses their hands to facilitate physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health. Specializing in therapeutic massage therapy, the specialists are there to improve the overall health and quality of life of their clients.

1011 Brookside Rd, Suite 120 Allentown, PA 18106

3. European Concept Salon (20 percent off if you show your Muhlenberg ID)

This salon offers everything you need: hair, nails, waxing, spray tanning, facials, makeup and even acupuncture. With an almost 5-star rating on Google Reviews, you can't go wrong with any of the treatments. A signature manicure (\$20 for Muhlenberg students) is almost half the price as other salons in the area. Walk-ins are welcome.

3015 College Height Blvd. Allentown, PA 18104

4. Truth Beauty Salon (10 percent off if you show your Muhlenberg ID)

A two-minute drive from campus makes this salon the most convenient if you are looking for something quick and effortless. Offering color, hair cuts, styling, and waxing services, this salon is the perfect destination for all hair types. A women's haircut and style (About \$27 for



Muhlenberg students depending on the length of hair) is essential in promoting healthy hair growth and removing the spread of split ends. Walk-ins are welcome.

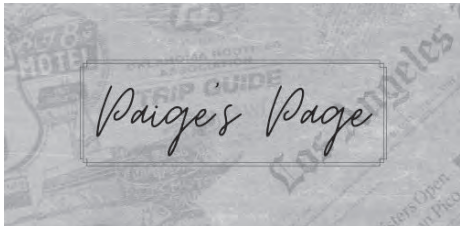
1850 W. Allen St. Allentown, PA 18104

5. Sato Salon Organics (15 percent off if you show your Muhlenberg ID)

Using vegan and eco-friendly products, the stylists ensure that you will be leaving the salon with healthy luscious hair. This laid back, friendly salon is a great place to feel at ease while you get your desired hair/nail treatment. A full-color treatment (\$72.25 for Muhlenberg students) service provides color from your roots to ends. Stop in for a free consultation.

3136 Hamilton Blvd. Allentown, PA 18103





## Paige's Page

BY PAIGE WEISBURG  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Hey besties! Welcome back to this week's edition of Paige's Page! I am so excited to write this week because this is the first edition since we have an official date and time for Paige's Page Live! As you may have seen in last week's edition, this super fun event will be on November 10th, at 10 p.m. in the Red Door! I obviously cannot see you adding it to your Google Calendars but I'm hoping, because we are all best friends, you are doing that right now... right? Speaking of friends, this week we are talking about friendship (seamless transition right?). Being around your friends everyday can be the most fun part of being in college but it can also be incredibly difficult when you may need space or when there is drama. A lot of you seem to be dealing with this right now, so let's get started!

**Q** Hi Paige! How do I reconnect with a friend I haven't spoken to in a while?

Hey bestie! This is such a good question! Obviously, I don't know the context of why you lost touch, or when, but most recently this happened to me with the p\*nd\*m\*c. I lost touch with a lot of people I was friends with in high school from just not reaching out, or because I disagreed with the way they were handling themselves with regard to many issues of that time. For the most part, I haven't really tried again with any of those people. However, the ones I have reconnected with are because I'll see them post on social media, or I'll look back through old photos and think to myself, I wonder how they're doing? Sending a text asking them to catch up or telling them that you miss them is always worth a shot if this is a relationship you really would like to have. They may feel the same way and have just been scared to reach out. So send that text, email, carrier pigeon, whatever makes you happy, because it might make them happy too.

**Q** Hey Paige, I went through a really rocky breakup recently, and some of my friends are taking the side of my ex. They have not spoken to me since we ended things. What should I do?

Hi bestie, sorry this is happening, I'm sure this is really difficult. The ending of a relationship is really upsetting, and you need your friends to lean on in times like this. It's very frustrating that you can't rely on these friends to get you through

this. I would hope that you have other friends, not connected to your ex, that you can vent to and cry to, and those are relationships you should try to rely on to get through this. With regard to these friends, they don't really seem like your friends right now. In my experience, you can tell a lot about a person by the way they support others when they are going through things. Obviously, everybody struggles and communication about your capacity to deal with other people and their problems is important. However, if they feel comfortable going to you for support, you should be able to come to them at this time also, and if you can't, maybe these aren't relationships you should keep. Obviously, losing a relationship and close friendships at the same time is really difficult but you have nothing but time to grieve. Take things one step at a time and lean on the people that let you. You got this!

**Q** Hi Paige, I am living with my best friends this year and I am so excited and I have been looking forward to it all summer! It has been a blast but sometimes I need my space and I am having a hard time communicating that to them. How should I do this?

Hey bestie! This is such a great question. Living with your closest friends is so fun. I'm doing that right now and like you, I love it, but I definitely understand what you are feeling. Sometimes you need time to process and feel—which I

think college generally helps you avoid. You may even just need some time with a closed door to just sit and exist. If you live in an apartment with a common space, maybe discuss with your roommates that when you are in there you are down to be social and when you are in your room you just want to be alone. If that doesn't work for you, maybe close your door when you don't want to be around other people. If you are in a dorm where you may not have your own door, then maybe work with your roommates to make a schedule so that you can all get what you may need. If they have class during a time when you don't, take that time to be alone in your space. If they like to do work outside of your room, maybe talk to them about times that they will be out so you can be alone. But make sure you give them the same opportunity. If you randomly need this time and space, be kind and ask for it as this is their space too. Being open about your needs is really important to making and keeping your living situation fun for you and the people you live with.

Paige's Page Live is officially happening! Nov. 10 at 10 p.m. in the Red Door! Can't wait to see you all there!

You can submit questions to <https://tinyurl.com/paigespagequestion>. It will also be linked in my Instagram bio—@paigeweisburg and in The Muhlenberg Weekly Instagram Linktree.

# Understanding the epigenetic Black trauma within me

BY MUSTAFA HALL  
OP/ED EDITOR

I remember being young and the idea of consuming content about Black people always being a dreadful process. I dreaded it not because I didn't want to know about my people, but because I knew by learning I was making an exchange—in exchange for powerful, much-needed knowledge that would feed me, I was giving up pieces of naiveté. In exchange for this cultural information, I was giving away the protective groundedness of comfort and safety, and in its place was a gnawing presence in my body that would last for days. While this was in part to do with the overt and normalized depictions of Black trauma and violence, it also had to do with how those images and that knowledge physically and spiritually sat and rested in my young body. It's vital to remember that this was long before we as a culture even began to discuss how unnecessary such violent depictions were. Through the media and content I was surrounded by, it felt as if the world around me believed in its entirety that Blackness is inherently braided by blood and death. And in order to discuss Blackness, the murky grayness of Black pain must be at the center. Joy was erased. Bliss was

burned.

I now question what good this offers to young Black minds. Yes, it is important for Black youth to cement an understanding of their position in a white supremacist world. Yes, it is life-saving to teach Black youth about their history, lineage, and the heartache that sometimes comes with it. But when Blackness and violence are shown so often together and aren't simultaneously infused with euphoria, love, and simple happiness, these two phenomena begin to merge and collide with each other.

I felt that collision in my body all too well growing up.

After watching or reading about Black experiences that often centered around violence as a youth, I was left with rampant fear and an overwhelming sense of alertness. My mind would be stained with unnecessarily gory images that my eye saw, caught, and encased. My physical body would be painted with panic and uneasiness. I never understood these feelings. I always asked myself: rather than being hungry for more knowledge, why did I end up feeling too full? Why did I always leave so deeply terrified and not simply satisfied?

After watching or reading Black media riddled with unethical violence, it felt as

though my body went into this fight-or-flight state where my very racial identity was under threat. It almost felt as if the racist people from those movies and books were going to come alive and murder me. I remember feeling so taken over by the content I witnessed that I would sometimes cry. I wouldn't cry because I was sad or furious but because my body was simply feeling a galaxy of emotions that I couldn't possibly hold or feel alone.

As I got older, I became more comfortable with learning about Blackness and being exposed to Black violence. This isn't to say that I didn't have similar bodily responses, but with age, time, and unpacking the density and depth of myself, I found peace in my discomfort. I found myself feeling linked in my emotions. Linked to my ancestors and the Black spirits that came before me. I began to understand that what I was feeling was in fact a trauma response rooted in epigenetics tracing back centuries. It was a trauma response that traveled through time and space itself but also through my very veins. My tears, fears, and anxieties weren't mine and mine alone but were also welded to the anger, moans, and heartache of those who came before me. I was my ancestors and my ancestors were me.

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor ([bergweeklyoped@gmail.com](mailto:bergweeklyoped@gmail.com)) or the Editor-in-Chief ([weeklyeditor@gmail.com](mailto:weeklyeditor@gmail.com)) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.





# Listen Loudly

...

A creative space for marginalized voices



3/

BY DES SUAREZ  
STAFF WRITER

## The Rule

BY HOPE BIDDLE  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

There is a rule about the past,  
You must acknowledge it and accept it before we move on,  
And you must understand that it doesn't care about you.  
You can always go back, but it will not be meant for you.

New tire swing sets that reeked of rubber and imagination  
No longer fit the heaviness you carry  
You can go back, but it sits there worn out and unused  
Hanging by the tethered, moldy rope.

The choruses of your favorite song from when you were  
Thirteen and too dumb to give up just yet  
But too self-aware to not try  
Are not meant for you now,  
You can listen, you can picture the cushion in the corner  
Of your favorite teacher's classroom and how  
It supported your weight then  
You can go back, but it's lying to you now.

You can go back to your mother's arms, but she is small  
Smaller than she used to be, taking up less space  
In your life than you remember she did  
When you stumbled and cried and wept  
In her arms,  
You remember her hair used to flutter in the sky  
And she brushed the eyelashes glued to your cheeks  
By your own mishaps, and rocked you  
You can go back, you can go back to her arms  
But you will be the one holding up her weight.

This rule is the hardest you will ever face,  
And it will never change, and it knows this,  
And it will never care as much about you, as you  
Care about it.

i am bleeding all the time from wounds i cant remember (is it mine to remember?)  
pain i cant describe (can you fathom it in words?)  
words that arent mine (i dont know what belongs to me and what belongs to you)

goblin words goblin thoughts

is this even my blood?

or is it an imposter?  
a goblin has crawled inside of me and lives as i lived  
cried as i cry  
screams as i scream  
an imposter lives inside my head as i lie  
awake in my bed, arms  
outstretched  
in the low of night,  
fingers etched  
around empty air,  
searching for  
comfort, the same 3:33  
impressed into the clock  
blaring inside my head,  
a head thats not mine  
or if it was i cant  
remember what it was like  
to happily inhabit  
its dark cabinets,  
claustrophobic cloves in the  
corners of my mind  
i thought the goblin  
was me, but i dont even  
know who me is?  
she is my  
mother my  
father my  
best friend my  
lover my  
demons  
my  
aching heart my  
bitten down nails  
my weak knees my  
tired eyes my tense  
shoulders my head  
thats lolling right off of  
my neck, finally  
weighed down by  
the exhaustion i feel in  
every joint and  
every vein and  
i think i know  
me but the goblin of  
me knows me better and  
the goblin knows  
not me but i dont  
know the goblin and  
the goblin is not me  
but i dont  
know  
not me and  
the goblin knows  
and  
i dont  
and the goblin  
cant be (is?)

me



PHOTO COURTESY OF TRAN FROM PEXELS



PHOTO COURTESY OF DES SUAREZ '23



# 'Berg field hockey fights 'til the finish

## *Field hockey builds momentum to make a playoff push*

BY LEXI SIPOS  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Muhlenberg field hockey was energized and ready to compete against the Johns Hopkins University team, ranked 6th in the nation by the DIII National Coaches Poll. Over the weekend, on Oct. 15, Muhlenberg unfortunately lost 1-0, with the score reflecting the team's determination to shut the Blue Jays down. Nevertheless, throughout their fall season, they have battled hard against all of their opponents.

The Mules have accomplished big wins in the conference with conquests including Dickinson College (1-0) on Sept. 23, Gettysburg College (2-1) on Oct. 8, and a McDaniel College slaughter (4-1) on Sept. 30. Johns Hopkins should be considered an unequivocal display of the women's fight and resilience in their game. The Blue Jays scored their lone goal 98 seconds into the game and were held at bay by the Mules for the remainder of the game. Grace Leard '25 was an instrumental player in the game to highlight. While keeping the Mules in the game, she made a career high of 11 saves at goalie. The offense was motivated by Nicole Randaza '24, who had two shots, and Zabella Aslanian '25 with a shot on goal. According to Paige Goldberg '24, "Although we lost 1-0, there were multiple occasions where we were so close, and no team has yet to score on Hopkins." After the result at Hopkins, Kaitlyn Hennelly '23 restated their mantra, "Our team mantra this sea-

son was 'Together—we will.' We understand that this sport is not just about us as individuals, but us as a team. Whether we win or lose we leave it all on the field, which is just as important as any score." Mainly, Johns Hopkins may have won the game, but our Muhlenberg field hockey team won the fight.

With their final four games of the season left, the women continue to make the most of their time with seniors Hennelly and Mallory Holson '23. Holson is a psychology major and Hennelly is on the Pre K-4 education track, both made the academic honor roll in 2020 and 2021. Most of all, since they are coming up on their last few games, the team has the goal to make the Centennial Conference playoffs.

Hennelly comments, "This team is constantly growing and evolving which makes me so hopeful that we are going to finish out the regular season strong—allowing us to make the playoffs. Though I try not to think about my field hockey career ending soon, it's inevitable. I use [that] as motivation to always play like it's my last, because soon it will be." It is very clear that there is a surge of excitement and motivation for the women to make the playoffs. Also, Goldberg states, "They just changed it so that six teams can make it and we know it'll be close with a few other teams with similar records but ultimately want to try our best to win out the rest of the games."

In addition to being positive student athletes, their comradery is a vital part of



Field hockey team gears up to make a push for the playoffs.

the team. Hennelly describes their inspiration, "My favorite part of being on this team is being surrounded by people who push me to be the best version of myself. Whether it's as a person or player, the women on this team are always motivating and supporting me." Despite any result on the field, the women always have each other to lean on.

Finally, Hennelly recognizes such ac-

complishments, "The proudest accomplishment I have of this season is the ability to respond to adversity. Whether it's refs, weather, turf, injuries, etc. we always rise to the occasion and overcome." Ultimately, despite any challenges the Muhlenberg field hockey team faces, they continue to get stronger on and off the field.

## 22 SPORTS, ONE TEAM IV

### *Muhlenberg opens campus to next generation of mules*

BY EVAN SCHLOTTERBECK  
STAFF WRITER

On Friday, Sept. 30, the Office of Community Engagement ran a "Mini-Mule" event at Muhlenberg College. Kids from a local elementary school spent the day learning what it's like to be a college student. At the Muhlenberg Athletic Leadership Team (MALT) activity, "Wanna race?" was the first thing a student asked when he ran over, eager to get going.

The event, which has been around for many years, originated because of a request by Muhlenberg's long-time partner, Roosevelt Elementary School. The program had to be put on hold during the pandemic, but Muhlenberg resumed hosting it in person this year.

During the event, students had the opportunity to engage in four stations that explored art, dance, STEM and athletics, ran by Muhlenberg student-athletes.

"The impact of an event like this is that students see what life can be like at a higher education campus," said Marcia Zillito, a teacher that accompanied the kids during the event. "This, perhaps, helps them strive to reach that on their own. It can



Rachel Saxton '25 and Mikayla DeMichele '25 demonstrate a game to the students at the "Mini-Mule" station in Scotty Wood Stadium on Friday, Oct. 14

be a motivator to do better. It also connects students to the education required to attain a career that interests them."

Adding the student-athlete section for

this year's event provided kids with a fresh avenue to connect with Muhlenberg students.

"So many young people love athletics,"

said Eveily Freeman, associate director of community engagement. "This is a great way to connect with kids and offer a deeper understanding of how athletics



# It runs in the family

## *Siblings tackle Muhlenberg together*

BY REBECCA MCCURDY  
ROOKIE WRITER

Going off to college usually means leaving your family behind. But for student-athletes, TJ Olifiers '26 and Cami Leyes '26, coming to Muhlenberg meant being reunited with their older siblings. Olifiers' older brother, Kevin Olifiers '23, is a 5th-year punter and quarterback for the football team, while Leyes' older brother, Sebastian Leyes '23, is a senior defender for the men's soccer team. Even though young Olifiers may play lacrosse and young Leyes plays volleyball, their siblings and friends have significantly impacted their decision and transition to Muhlenberg.

One of the most difficult parts about being an underclassman is making friends, especially with upperclassmen. Olifiers and Leyes did not have that problem, already knowing their older brothers' friends. "When I got here, I knew people already, I had already met a lot of Kevin's friends so it was nice to have familiar faces on campus," said Olifiers. "When I hang out with Sebastian, I'm with his friends and it makes it more comfortable to be on campus while we're all still new here," Leyes agreed. Even though most student-athletes know the upperclassmen on their team, having an older sibling has introduced Leyes and Olifiers to upperclassmen on other teams as well. Leyes' older brother has introduced her to his friends on the tennis team, lacrosse team and friends that don't play sports. Olifiers' brother was also able to introduce him to players on the wrestling team, baseball team and even some of the upperclassmen on his own team.

Not only do Leyes and Olifiers have more confidence and knowledge about Muhlenberg than the average first-year, but they also have more support and out-



PHOTO BY REBECCA MCCURDY '26

Cami Leyes '26 and TJ Olifiers '26

lets. "Having a sibling on campus is definitely a huge help. Kevin teaches me some study habits.

I'll go to the library with him sometimes and he'll tell me how long I need to be there and what

I need to do to get good grades," said Olifiers. It is especially helpful since their

older siblings understand what Leyes and Olifiers are going through and can offer support and advice. "Playing a sport is a little overwhelming, especially the first couple [of] weeks [because] every moment of your day is planned out, you don't have any freedom.

**"Having a sibling on campus is definitely a huge help."**

can be part of their futures. Plus, getting our bodies moving is good for everyone of all ages."

Some kids could not wait to start playing with the ball, while others were more interested in talking to the student-athletes about various topics such as sports and their favorite foods. Regardless of the mode of participation, the kids made the most of their time with the student-athletes.

Student MALT coordinator for the event and softball player Jamie Carfagna '25 mentioned that the best part of her day was being the "big kid." "Kids can look up to us," said Carfagna. "Having big kids around is a good thing. Being passionate and upbeat about athletic interests we share with the kids is how, as student-athletes, we can make an impres-

sion on the kids."

"Positive role models are extremely important for our students," said Zillito. "Our students are urban dwellers, and some need positive role models to help

**"Students sometimes just need to see there is more offered in the world than what is directly around them."**

them. Not that their lives are negative in some way, just maybe there is more out there."

For athletes like Carfagna, taking time out of her busy schedule to attend the event was well worth it. After all, being told, "I want to be like you one day," is a memory she will likely never forget.

It was hard adjusting but it was nice because I would talk about it with my brother and he was like 'it's normal for you to feel overwhelmed' and it was nice that I could comfortably talk about how I was overwhelmed and stressed," said Leyes. Both pairs of siblings have each other's back in a unique way. The freshmen also have their older brothers' houses as a way to escape the sometimes-crammed Walz dorm. "It's nice to have a place to decompress. When you meet new people, you feel the need to put on this mask, but my brother already knows me, so I can just go to his house and be myself," said Leyes.

Neither of the freshmen chose Muhlenberg specifically because of their sibling, but it was a major factor in their decisions. "When I first got my offer from Muhlenberg, Kevin wouldn't tell me anything about the school or give me any insider information, but just looking at the success he had with his network and the connections he made, I was like 'OK I want to be a part of that, I want to have a close-knit community like that'," said Olifiers.

Leyes' decision to come to Muhlenberg was slightly different. "Once Sebastian came here and I visited a lot, I liked the campus and he seemed to be happy here," said Leyes. However, she originally was not going to play volleyball in college. But after having a successful senior season, she reached out to head volleyball coach, Rob McVicker, asking if they had a spot for her once she was already accepted into the school. Unlike Olifiers, her brother had nothing to do with her athletic recruitment. However, both agree that they would've come to Muhlenberg regardless, having their siblings was just a benefit.

*Next issue...*



*The preview of all your favorite fall sports.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## Soccer pitch patches

*Mules soccer teams tackle issues with game day field*

By TOM HILLER  
MANAGING EDITOR

The conditions of both the practice and game fields for the men's and women's soccer teams have recently had problems. "This preseason, I noticed that there was a lot of dead grass, it was pretty dry and patches were growing in the field," said midfielder Francois D'Elia '23. For D'Elia and his teammates, this meant that several of their home games had to be relocated to other fields in the Lehigh Valley.

Head Coach Sean Topping had to break the news to his team a week before the season opener. "[Topping] told us we weren't going to play the first three games at home," said D'Elia. "There were still patches of grass that weren't growing right. And the corners on the fields didn't look too good."

"While the varsity field was being redone we played at two different fields. The first one being the Lehigh County fields and the second one being J. Birney Crum Stadium," said an anonymous women's soccer player. "Both of these facilities were fine to play at, but just did not feel like home for our team and it just felt very unprofessional and embarrassing having the other team showing up to a field that was not our own. It definitely made it more challenging on us having to drive ourselves and worry[ing] about getting all the players and [their] equipment over there. And, not being used to the playing surface, but we made it work."

Although athletic grass fields will experience wear and tear throughout the season, the hope is that dirt patches and uneven grass growth will be fixed by next season's start. "When I transferred in spring 2021, the field felt good," said D'Elia. "Then last summer, it was not in the same condition."

"We were in a drought," explained Assistant Director of Plant Operations Brett Fulton. "The eastern part of the state was in a drought. The field is irrigated, but you're never going to make up for the lack of rain within irrigation systems. You just can't put enough consistent moisture for the very high heat we saw throughout the summer."

Death by a thousand cuts, or in this case, patches. Fulton believes that a mountain of problems has left the field in this condition. Like mentioned before, the lack of rain was a concern. The amount of bodies using the field had also



PHOTO BY TOM HILLER '23

Jack Scuro '24 and rest of team return to Varsity Field, soon to be replaced with turf.

contributed. Both programs have opened the fields to the community through several soccer clinics and camps, one of those being Mules Youth Day Camp that took place in July.

"It was the hottest weekend of the summer and they had a camp there," said Grounds Manager Roberto Rivera. "So, it was over-stressed especially when you have 200-300 kids on the field with that degree weather."

Plant Operations only mows and provides minimal treatment to the athletic grass fields. An outside contractor is responsible for major adjustments and repairs. "We have used an outside contractor for some of the work on the field, including this year," says Fulton. "The outside contractor is a landscape contractor and they have a program set up for fertilization that starts in the spring, and continues until the season starts. And then there's a little bit of treatment during the season."

Varsity Field's species of grass has also played into its downfall. "It's a bluegrass field," said Fulton. "A lot of lawns are a mix of perennial rye and bluegrass and fescue. The soccer fields are pure bluegrass, so you're dealing with a type of grass that is very susceptible to the heat and the dryness."

A game pitch must adhere to NCAA standards, with white lines painted straight and the grass full, flat and freshly cut. But the grass field, used by both programs as their practice field adjacent to Varsity Field, has some leeway. Separated

only by a press box and a few aluminum benches from the game pitch, the practice field is the middle child of the athletic fields. "Our practice field is sometimes a bit unplayable," D'Elia adds, "I'd say it's bumpy, with a lot of random holes and dirt patches all over the place. That's much worse than the game field."

The main objective of a practice field is to be the punching bag for the soccer teams and preserve the game pitch so it's in top shape for games. If both of the soccer teams used one field for practices and games, it would become a nightmare for Plant Operations. "The field would be destroyed within the first couple weeks of the season," agrees D'Elia. "Patches everywhere. Spots too from cutting, especially when it gets wet. It would just be a brutal surface to play on."

Returning to the natural grass Varsity Field was a relief for D'Elia. The Mules were able to return to play at Muhlenberg Sept. 17 against McDaniel College. D'Elia and his teammates managed to win 3-1. The men's team has managed to go (1-0-2) since returning to play on-campus. "I'm a huge proponent of playing on grass fields. I was excited to be back and have the rest of our home games at home."

Within the 'futbol' world, maintaining a grass soccer field (pitch over on the other side of the pond) is an art that many can learn but few can master. D'Elia says he prefers a grass pitch over artificial turf. "I think in general, if you talk to any soccer player, a nice, well-maintained grass field is going to be preferable to a turf field, it

just plays differently. Good grass fields are gonna play like turf, but it's not going to bounce as much. You grow up watching soccer on these nice grass fields in Europe and all over the place. And that's something you just want to play on."

But as nice as a playable grass field suited for varsity collegiate play might be, the maintenance might not be worth it. "We decided to look into synthetic," said Fulton. "The field will be used by athletics and by the summer conference groups, and will be able to withstand a full schedule. We have spent several years discussing it, researching it, and are now looking at making the switch. We are working with designers, contractors, and engineers to move forward with the installation of a synthetic turf field."

Artificial turf can be a beneficial alternative. "It's definitely a lot less maintenance. But there is grooming. There's an infill that goes on a synthetic turf like the football field. You have to groom the turf to keep the fiber standing upright. It doesn't take as much manpower and you have to keep the visit infill that filters down between the fibers. So you have to maintain that you have to keep it at a playable level, which is honestly very simple."

"The stadium soccer grass field will eventually become a turf field," said Director of Athletics Lynn Tubman. "We are currently in the planning phase. The College has received permits and we have put the project out to bid. It is hard to determine [a] specific timeline due to the current environment with any construction project. We are seeing delays nationwide due to supply chain and labor issues. Once we get through the bid phase we hope to have a clearer picture on the project timeline."

"I'm definitely going to miss the grass field," said soccer player Josh Bordwick '23. "When it is well kept, it is great to play in and such a home field advantage."

The same anonymous women's soccer player echoed a similar sentiment, "I prefer to play on grass. But, if the school unfortunately cannot take care of it properly and this will continue to be an issue for the men's and women's soccer program then I think it is only necessary that Varsity Field becomes turf because it does not take as much maintenance and time as grass does."

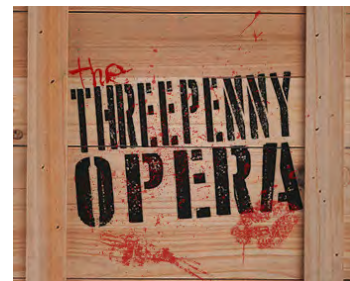
Coming up this week in

# SPORTS

Oct. 20 - Oct. 26

Football	Women's Soccer	Men's Soccer	Volleyball
<p>MUHLENBERG VS JUNIATA</p>	<p>MUHLENBERG VS JOHNS HOPKINS</p>	<p>MUHLENBERG VS JOHNS HOPKINS</p>	<p>MUHLENBERG VS FRANKLIN &amp; MARSHALL</p>
Sat., Oct. 22 @ 12:00 p.m. Juniata College	Sat., Oct. 22 @ 4:00 p.m. Varsity Field	Sat., Oct. 22 @ 7:00 p.m. Varsity Field	Wed., Oct. 26 @ 7:00 p.m. Memorial Hall





THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2022  
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## NEWS

Learning leadership the  
Disney way.

read more on page 3



# CEILING CAN'T HOLD US

*MILE house ceiling collapse  
prompts investigation and  
relocation*



PHOTO BY AYDEN LEVINE '23/PHOTO EDITOR

Students are forced into the 2201 Chew Street Residence Hall after investigation reveals concern.

## ARTS & CULTURE

Big Lettuce Productions  
discusses student film.

read more on page 7



## OP/ED

Katherine Conlon '24 has  
choice words for Swifties.

read more on page 8



## SPORTS

Women's basketball re-  
turns to Memorial Hall.

read more on page 12



By CYDNEY WILSON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

On Sept. 23, a bedroom ceiling in student-designated housing in the MILE area collapsed, leaving debris spread across Jason Ivey's '23 room and belongings. He told The Weekly, "About a 6x4 foot section from the ceiling in my room collapsed with no warning while I was out of the house." This incident left many wondering what could have caused it, what is being done to prevent it from happening again, and how the situation is being rectified with the students affected.

According to Dean of Student Life Allison Williams, MILE houses were last inspected this past July. "Every year during the summer, a team that includes a carpenter, electrician and plumber, go through and do an annual inspection and maintenance in each MILE property. And then in addition to that, the Allentown city inspector comes every five years. So the last time the city did its inspection was in 2018. And we are due for our next one in 2023."

At the time of this year's inspection, there were no red flags raised about the property.

Following the incident, "The College immediately hired an external engineering firm to come in and do an invasive investigation into that particular property to find out what happened first," explained Williams.

Many of the houses on 23rd Street, where the collapse occurred, are around 100 years old and use similar materials. The College could not be certain of the materials used until the

invasive search was complete; thus, multiple houses were investigated.

"We identified 12 houses that should be looked at. The engineering company then went through all of those. Four of those houses fully passed their invasive inspection with no need for any repair. Four required full ceiling replacement... Four require repairs, but it's more like putting in an extra beam to support what's already there. So some of those can be done while students are still in the house or over the summer."

Williams claims that there was no way to have predicted the incident occurring. "What they were clear about is that to any inspector including the city's inspectors, that you would not have known at all that it was an issue and even if in other properties you would see cracks in the ceiling, typically those are not indicative of any sort of issue... Those hairline cracks are not something that would send an engineer thinking that something wouldn't pass inspection." She added in reference to the house that sustained damage, "The invasive investigation found that on that house, the materials age and weather over time. And so the roof collapse was due to a failure in a ceiling joist and fastener in part of the second floor ceiling."

As a result of the damage and subsequent inspections, two staff members and 10 students were ultimately relocated. An additional staff member and three students live in houses that will require future work.

The students whose MILE did have damage received help with

their moving process.

Director of Residential Operations Katie Shelley shared that, "They helped us identify what things they needed to come over to their temporary housing. We assisted in moving things over [to] the building [and] unloading. They did their own packing and unpacking."

Other students who were relocated were not offered this assistance. Des Suarez '23 and their roommate also had to relocate. "Around 4 p.m., maybe 5 p.m., I got a call... And she basically just told me that the inspection had turned out that they needed to do emergency work on the house, and that I need[ed] to move out, like, as soon as possible. And she told me that I had to move out by Sunday night, on Thursday."

Suarez was offered meal swipes and dining dollars, which she accepted. Her roommate was given a different date which they had to be out by, to which Suarez said, "I think it was just a wires misplaced thing. Then we got an email about it clarifying the time and then I went to pick up my key." Suarez packed their things before leaving for Fall Break, and upon her return on the Monday after break she said, "I picked up friends from the airport, came back, got back around four or five. And then I was legitimately moving out for the rest of the night. It took me like six hours to move out and then move in. And they told me it was for three to four weeks, and just to bring what I would need for then because I wouldn't be allowed to go back in, which is understandable, but... I feel like I need a lot for that. And especial-

ly [for] English majors, [there are] so many books."

Students who were relocated were given an approximate timeline of when they would be able to move back into their housing, but not an exact date. These estimations varied per property and the amount of work that would need to be done. Other added factors contributing to return dates included uncertainty regarding how much work would need to be done until the demolition of ceilings was completed, availability of materials and workers and if students living in certain MILEs had housing accommodations. Ivey shared that he was originally given the date of Nov. 1 to be able to return to his MILE.

Shelley shared that affected students will "be able to move back into their permanent assignments before the semester is over. And in all of those cases significantly before that, but I don't have an exact date for each of them."

Suarez and their roommate are now living in the 2201 Chew Street Residence Hall, and both have their own bedrooms, which is what they initially had in their MILE. The students were not given a date by which they would have to move back. Suarez said, "I'm assuming I might just get another call. And we both were contemplating if we even wanted to move back because at this point, it's like a whole 'nother half a day doing that. It's really exhausting... We were talking about how there should have been people to help us but there weren't." Only the students



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

10/17/2022 Trumbower: Report of found iPad, owner later claimed item.	dent, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student refused further treatment or transport.
10/18/2022 Baker Center for the Arts: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student transported to hospital by friend.	10/22/2022 Taylor Hall (Kathryn): Report of sick student, student transported to hospital by friend. Benfer Hall: Report of fire safety violation, a covered smoke detector, referred to judicial.
10/19/2022 East Hall: Report of found wallet, owner later claimed item. Trexler Library: Report of lock down drill. Brown Hall: Report of fire alarm from cooking, system silenced and reset. Seegers Union: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student transported to hospital by Campus Safety. On Campus Location: Report of hit and run causing damage to fender and bumper, investigation to continue.	10/23/2022 Prosser Hall: Report of alcohol violation, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, Allentown EMS responded and transported student to hospital. Seegers Union: Report of theft of bag, no suspects at this time, investigation to continue Walz Hall: Report of attempted theft of bicycle, no suspects at this time, investigation to continue.
10/20/2022 On Campus Location: Report of harassment, reporting parties spoken to, investigation to continue.	
10/21/2022 N. 22nd Street: Report of fire alarm from contractors working in area, system silenced and reset. Ott Street: Report of sick stu-	

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# Learning leadership the Disney way

## *Reflecting on the Sophomore Disney Leadership Experience.*

BY JOHNNY VEGLIA  
Co-A&C EDITOR

Disney may not be the first thing that comes to mind when discussing leadership, but the Walt Disney Company has a wide variety of areas and entertainment offerings that require diligent leadership positions. The Sophomore Disney Leadership Experience at Muhlenberg College allows students to take in this perspective while building community and having fun.

This past academic year, the program made a return to campus, even when things were still up in the air regarding COVID-19. The Disney Imagination Campus was not guaranteed, but Director of Student Organizations, Leadership, & Engagement (S.O.L.E.) Ellen Lentine and former Assistant Director of Student Organizations, Leadership, and Engagement Steve Dutton assured the group of students that the trip would happen regardless. The group included juniors and sophomores to accommodate for the pandemic's impact on the experience. With the departure of Dutton from Muhlenberg's team this past spring, Lentine joined forces with Director of Student Transitions and Family Programs Tim Black (successor to Dutton) and Assistant Director of Student Organizations, Leadership, and Engagement Natalie Shaw.

Black stated, "We had a mix of students last year including juniors and sophomores so I hope that those who held leadership positions were able to refine their skills and those who were new to leadership were starting to find a passion and understanding for it."

The trip is traditionally for sophomores and allows for community building and connections with everyone involved. Jacob Forman '24, a transfer student, stated, "Well, I came into this school a bit shy. I was a sophomore that didn't really know anyone. This group introduced me to like-minded individuals that were passionate about similar ideas. On the other side of that, I was able to learn about other interests outside of my department!"

One of the students involved with the

experience this past year, Elaina Ragusa '23, stated, "Looking back at pictures and videos, I get emotional because it was just such an amazing experience getting to meet so many people and learn about teamwork and leadership... Even for people interested in business or communications, this is definitely a great program for people from all walks of life."

"It was definitely a journey! The juniors... who were accepted our sophomore year thankfully didn't have to re-apply! We were given the opportunity to still go on the trip... It honestly felt great to finally go on the trip this past spring. For a second, I thought I wasn't going to be able to go, especially because of all the restrictions and rise in COVID cases, but when we finally went, all the excitement and happiness I felt when applying for this program two years ago came rushing back immediately," stated Britney Jara '23.

The program featured meetings and fundraising activities for the trip, including selling finals care packages for students. For this year, Lentine has transferred the entire program to Shaw and Black and they have allowed for the program to grow and evolve.

"We have a greater emphasis on the pre-trip curriculum this year. The past two years have been learning curves for figuring out how to navigate the trip during the pandemic," shared Shaw. "This year we have a better understanding of the trip and so we are able to focus more on the experience before and after the trip to ensure that it is a full year long opportunity for participants."

The group currently meets monthly in the fall and will meet bi-weekly in the spring up until the trip to help balance the educational elements with the amusement. Black shared, "This allows us the opportunity to do a lot of the workshops and education here on campus. When we are in Disney, we do give students the opportunity to have fun."

The duo is also an effective team and they have a strong friendship to lead the group and the overall program. "In all seriousness, working closely with Tim is a dream. He is our resident Disney expert—



Disney Leadership students are able to "earn their ears" by learning to be role models the Disney way.

I literally could not do Disney without him," stated Shaw.

Black shared, "Natalie is one of my favorite people at Muhlenberg. We both started at Muhlenberg at the same time and have only gotten close since I moved into my role as Director of Student Transitions and Family Programs. We balance each other nicely in our working styles. Natalie handles a lot of the curriculum planning while I handle a lot of the logistics of the travel accommodations with Disney and the airlines. I know that in the areas that I lack, Natalie is there to fill in the gaps."

"It's fun to share the magic of Disney with the group and make Disney memories," declared Shaw.

The experience is more than just a fun trip to Disney, as it really does impact students' Muhlenberg career and their experiences at the College and beyond. "The program is beneficial to college careers in a multitude of ways," shared Shaw. "We create a community to build relationships on campus, engage students in leadership opportunities to make them more confident in their abilities and students have the experience of traveling (budgeting for meals, time management, etc.). We have also seen some students in the program enter the [Disney College Program] after meeting the cast during our workshops!"

Ragusa shared a similar comment by saying, "I also loved learning a little bit more about how it is working for Disney and the Disney College Program itself." Students also got to see a behind the scenes look at EPCOT during the trip, walking through wardrobe and for areas for cast members only.

In addition to the behind-the-scenes experiences, the trip included two workshops which allowed for students to learn more about leadership and the integral role teamwork can play in the process. Brianna Moyer '24 said, "The most beneficial part of the trip was the workshops we did in Disney World. It was great to learn firsthand from Disney employees and to see some behind the scene stuff that normal visitors wouldn't get. I loved that we got to do the workshops while also enjoying time in the park. Disney really emphasized the importance of teamwork in leadership and how everyone in a group plays an important role."

Jara concluded, "Not only did I learn so much about what I want for my future and the opportunities available to me, I also had a huge amount of fun enjoying the parks with some of my closest friends and people that also share a mutual love for Disney!"

## A dive into Buddhism

BY SINHAYANA SRINIVASAN  
STAFF WRITER

Teaching religious and cultural diversity at a Predominantly White Institution (PWI) is both important and essential, which is why the Worldview program aims to increase religious literacy and introduce people to the cultural diversity in their community. Originally called the "First Friday" program, the Worldview series continues that program with a few changes in scheduling and formatting.

On Oct. 18, the Worldview had a guest

speaker talk about his faith and religion: Buddhism. Tim Loftus, a follower of Tibetan Buddhism, was recommended by Khurram Hussain, professor of religious studies at Lehigh University, Ph.D., and a member of the advisory board of The Worldview Institute.

The event took place in the Seegers Union Event Space, with the talk conducted in an interview format. Loftus was asked questions and queries about his faith, the challenges he's faced and how he was introduced to Tibetan Buddhism. He talked about how he was introduced to Tibetan Buddhism in college by

one of his professors. He was fascinated by the concept and began to read more about Buddhism and even found a meditation center to attend regularly. He then converted completely to Tibetan Buddhism and joined a retreat center as a chaplain. More recently he has been getting into the academic side of religion and Buddhism.

Loftus also spoke about the common misconceptions people have of Buddhism. He explained how Buddhism not only impacts the individual, but also the greater community saying, "Buddhism can be a source of compassionate action and social change, it doesn't just have to be self-help or a psychological improvement project, it can also inform positive change in the world."

Buddhism is a quiet practice; however it

is a practice for both oneself and the community and anyone can learn the teachings of Buddha. He also mentioned how Buddhism is not about living in the future, but living in the present. This particularly resonated with Alex Konzelmann '26, who said, "I was really interested in the aspect of not thinking about the future as much and living in the present. I think that aspect should be involved in other religions as well to get rid of the materialistic views that most people have and also expand our minds on what we can do at any given moment. It was really fun and engaging as well. This program is really great for increasing religious literacy and practicing pluralism."

SEE **BUDDHISM** PAGE 4



# Alumni spotlight

## '09 alum starts under the Biden-Harris Administration.

BY MATTHEW BARESH  
CO-NEWS EDITOR

Adrian Shanker '09 has established himself as a well-known advocate and activist for the LGBTQI+ community. Shanker was the leader of multiple campaigns working to protect LGBTQI+ rights and prevent the implementation of conversion therapy in the U.S. He is also the author of two books, "Bodies and Barriers: Queer Activists on Health" and "Crisis and Care: Queer Activist Responses to a Global Pandemic," which both explore the inequalities faced by this community. Shanker's interest in these policies was sparked by his classes as a political science and religion studies double major at Muhlenberg.

"One of the first courses I took as an undergraduate student at Muhlenberg was a community-engaged learning course through the political science department, where each student was paired with an elementary school student and we were asked to help them navigate a solution to a societal problem," Shanker explained. "That course [which was taught [by Lanethea Mathews Shultz, Ph.D.] helped me understand how even a very specific policy that gets enacted or changed can make a profound impact on people's lives. I've taken lessons from Muhlenberg like that one with me throughout my career as an advocate and non-profit leader, and now in my current role."

After graduating from George Washington University with a graduate certificate in LGBT Health Policy & Practice, Shanker began his career as an

LGBTQI+ activist. Three years into his occupational journey, Shanker established the Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center here in Allentown.

"I worked for eight years leading LGBTQI+ community centers in Allentown, Pennsylvania and Marin County, California," he shared. "Working at the community level let me really understand the health challenges LGBTQI+ Americans experience every day."

Shanker valued those eight years of experience and has recently joined the Biden-Harris Administration this month with hopes to apply his knowledge through legislative action.

"In my role as Senior Advisor on LGBTQI+ Health Equity, I provide policy advice within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services," said Shanker. "OASH plays a critical role in promoting a high quality of health for everyone living in America through its numerous offices, including the Office of Population Health, Office of Women's Health, Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS policy, Office of Climate Change and health equity and more. It is an honor to work under the leadership of Admiral Rachel Levine, assistant secretary for health, to advance the goal of health equity for LGBTQI+ people!"

Shanker reflected on his career path since graduating from the College. He shared, "Remember that there is no singular 'correct' career path. Seek out opportunities that are exciting and meaningful and look for ways to make a positive impact in your community."

### FROM CEILING PAGE 1

who directly had damage done to their housing were provided help with their moving process.

Williams added, "Max[imum]—we're looking at [students coming] back in January. And the reason for that is not wanting to tell them October 31, and then it's like, oh, the ceiling joists are on backorder, it's going to be two more weeks, and then three more weeks. And that's just more disruptive than being able to get settled in a new space. It also has to all be inspected once it's done before they can move back in. And that's up to the city to do so we just didn't want to get their hopes up. But we do think it will likely be in November."

All students who were relocated were offered assistance for dining dollars and meal swipes, "Because while folks had a full kitchen, they weren't able to move all of their dishes over and things like that," explained Shelley.

Ivey, whose belongings sustained damage, shared that, "As far as reimbursement they paid for everything of mine that was damaged which included a TV, Xbox and fan among other things."

Greg Wilson '24 is one of the students whose house needed work, but the work was not urgent enough to require relocation of the residents. He explained, "It all happened very fast. HRL told us it was safe to stay, however we could choose to move to another location if we wanted to. We ultimately decid-

ed that we didn't want to uproot our whole life in the middle of the semester so we sent them an email saying that we would stay as long as they could promise us the space was safe. They responded the next day letting us know that it was in fact safe, and that our kitchen would remain usable [which was a concern considering the housemates have the College's smallest meal plan] as the rest of the construction was going to happen during winter break. I went to sleep that night finally thinking about things other than the safety of my home. But, I was woken up the next morning by loud noises down the hall. I walked out in my PJs to find Plant Ops drilling in the ceiling. The next two mornings I had to skip breakfast because the furniture in my kitchen was pushed up against my pantry and there were tools covering the counters. We got in touch with HRL to request the remaining construction happen over break, like they had said, as long as the apartment was safe." Residents of Wilson's MILE were not offered meal swipes and dining dollars because they were not relocated. Right now, the house has temporary supports in place until the end of the semester, and Wilson and his roommates are staying put.

In regard to how the school handled the situation Suarez said, "I think it was fine. I mean it could have been better, but it's just a weird situation to have to tell someone they need to move out right away. Of course I know they want us to be safe... More time would have been nice or

just a more clear timeline."

Ivey echoed this sentiment, saying, "There were a few minor things I wish they did differently but overall I think the school handled it well."

An anonymous student who was impacted added, "The school has moved quickly in repairing damage and hopefully preventing something like this from happening again. That being said, with the number of students having similar complaints to us, better precautionary measures need to be taken to ensure our safety."

Wilson said, "I completely understand that this is a very tough situation for the College. This is not something that they knew about until it was too late. However, I am a little concerned that nobody is looking after the long-term safety of the properties... I hope that institutionally we can learn from this incident by working on bettering the lines of communication, and better tracking of property safety."

Shelley said, "I know for the students who are being relocated for proactive work that doing it during the semester is disruptive, but we want to take every precaution you know that there could be an issue, we want to take every possible precaution. And so I will, I will err on that for the sake of safety."

### FROM BUDDHISM PAGE 3

Loftus continued to modern Buddhism, or Anglo-transnational Buddhism. Buddhism has evolved over the years, and contemporary Buddhism, especially in Western countries, is much different than what it might be in traditional settings. He gave an anecdote about his own religious community which is primarily based in North America. They do a lot of conscious thinking about how they practice and study. They have certain methods on how to filter out what is essential, as a lot of the texts they study from are translated to English, and are updated for modern use. Office of Communications Online Content Editor Sarah Wojcik, a practitioner of Buddhism, stated, "I thought that it was very interesting and informative. I've been exploring Zen Buddhism, and so I was very curious to hear the perspective from a Tibetan Buddhist practitioner."

Loftus further talked about

differences between the American originated Buddhist groups and those traditionally from India or Tibet, and said, "The Buddhist world in America has been this far divided." Traditional Tibetan teachers from India often did two events when they came to America, one being for the largely white followers who were middle to upper class and highly educated, and the other being for the Himalayan natives, which had many other experiences and cultural differences. The practice has always been divided between white people having their own Dharmas, or duties in Buddhism, and immigrant communities from Asia having their own Buddhist practice.

The interview came to an end and audience members were encouraged to ask questions. People were avidly asking questions, whether it was about Buddhism or Loftus himself. Matan Kogen '23 commented "I thought it was great. I didn't know much about Buddhism going into it. I took a class freshman year but that's

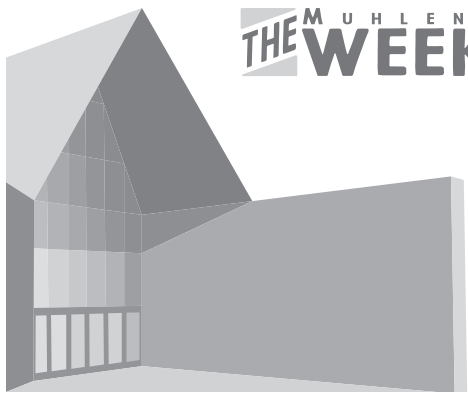
pretty much the extent of my knowledge, and I thought they did a really good job making it easy to understand and relatable to someone who hasn't had much experience with the religious tradition."

Professor of Religion Studies and Director of Institute for Religious and Cultural Understanding William Gruen, Ph.D., said, "Whether you're religious or not, understanding religious and cultural diversity is important for all of us because it influences the way that people in our world operate. What we're doing is not about indoctrination or theology, it's about human interactions and understanding of cultural differences, and that's all of our jobs." He further stated, "If students or anybody from the campus community wants to be involved with what we're doing, there are opportunities for research and internships, and they should reach out to us. We are really eager to have as many students involved in the Institute!"



PHOTO COURTESY OF [HTTPS://ADRIANSHANKER.COM](https://adrianshanker.com)





"Cinema is not a series of abstract ideas, but rather the phrasing of moments." - Jean-Luc Goddard

## VOICES: Representing the unrepresented

By SINHAYANA SRINIVASAN  
STAFF WRITER

The Office of Multicultural Life (OML) has been hosting a college-wide podcast called VOICES which has been gaining increased popularity, and has become a popular platform for people to share their stories. This podcast was started by Shobha Pai '24 and David Holman '22.

Pai was originally hired only to do a marketing job at OML. One day, while talking to a then-staff member, Pai was told that there was an idea for a podcast called VOICES in the making. Pai was immediately intrigued and inquired more about it. She expressed her interest in making the podcast, and she and Holman began working on it together.

The initial ideology behind the podcast was to highlight marginalized communities and the voices of underrepresented communities on campus. Muhlenberg is a Predominantly White Institution (PWI), and students of culturally diverse backgrounds might not have the opportunity to share their experiences. Pai commented on this by expressing that, "I feel like there are many places here that have been made for only white communities, and there are less for people of color and those of first-generation communities. I just wanted a place where they can speak openly."

Pai is a lover of podcasts herself saying, "I listen to a podcast every day." She hopes that VOICES keeps continuing, even after she graduates. She thinks it is a great place for students' voices to be highlighted and for those who aren't comfortable speaking in front of a crowd



Self-proclaimed lover of podcasts Shobha Pai '24 helped spearhead the OML podcast entitled "VOICES."

to still have the opportunity and place to share their opinions and views. This is even a great opportunity for students who are interested in producing, as Pai mentioned how "The podcast is an excellent opportunity to provide passionate producers the opportunity to showcase their work in a non-professional setting, but in a professional manner."

Pai also mentioned how the process of making a podcast is not that complicated. People might be thinking that there is this huge process of brainstorming, but anyone who wants to be part of it just needs to talk to Pai and tell her what they want to speak on. She said, "It's not a big

deal. We take two hours to shoot and then we edit it, it's pretty simple."

VOICES is producing a special podcast in conjunction with Comunidad Latinx, to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. Daniela Martinez '23, president of Comunidad Latinx, decided to connect with VOICES to bring attention to the Latinx community on the campus and said, "I believe that our community is so unique and diverse and that oftentimes gets overlooked." VOICES will also help in bringing attention to some of the issues the Latinx community faces in this day and age. This is an excellent way for Comunidad Latinx to speak their truth on a

platform where people will actually listen to them.

Martinez also said, "My expectations for the podcast are that it talks about issues the community faces and truly showcases how unique each culture is within the community. I hope that people can stop seeing Latinx people as a homogeneous group. There is so much to celebrate and learn from all the cultures that make up the Latinx community. I also hope that Latinx students feel like they have a safe space to go to."

VOICES is not only two people's efforts, but has the blood and sweat of many people. Pai said, "It's not only me, I want to thank a lot of people without which VOICES would never have been able to become what it is today. Robin Riley-Casey, the director of multicultural life at Muhlenberg, the Office of Multicultural Life, [Holman], and so many more people have done a lot to make this work. It's not solely my thing, I want it to carry on even after I'm gone, and for more people to join and participate in the podcast."

Martinez, and many others in the past and the future, are grateful for this opportunity to express their views when they might not have been able to before. Martinez expressed her gratitude by saying, "Thank you so much for making a podcast on Comunidad. The current E-board is doing whatever we can to make sure we make everyone feel included and help people learn about the different cultures in our community."

VOICES showcases that even though Muhlenberg is a PWI, there are still communities and artistic outlets for people of color, and that this is a place they can tap into and be welcomed in with open arms.

## Radio Riff-Off features night of original music

By JULIA LENNON  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On the night of Friday, Oct. 21, over 100 people gathered in the Red Door to watch the 4th annual WMUH Radio Riff-Off. A microphone stood in the spotlight, awaiting its first performer. The red wall paint and large WMUH banner brought out a crimson glow that was characteristically Muhlenberg. "Radio Riff-Off is a competition that highlights the original music of our peers," explained Emma Ash '24, one of the co-MCs of the event.

Sabrina Russo '26 was the first of seven talented students to perform. Russo sang her song, "I Think I Only Miss You When I'm Bored," and later said that it was a weird sensation to perform her piece, but "this school gives me so many opportunities to find myself."

The second performer was Matthew Robertson '23, a student artist who has written over 100 songs. Before singing his original, "Don't Wait," Robertson gave a

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## Big Lettuce talks big productions

By KEANNA PEÑA  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

From the creative minds of Big Lettuce Productions and sketch comedy group YRK, comes "MILE House 69," a buddy cop film wherein two campus police officers are tasked with shutting down a meal swipe cartel based in MILE house 69. There are two campus police officers; one is an old corrupt veteran (played by writer, director and producer Jamen Meistrich '24) and the other is a by-the-book rookie (played by Evelyn Carlin '24).

Their comedic dynamic unfolds as they try to take down the leader of the meal swipe cartel, who believes in free food for all students.

YRK is a sketch comedy group made up of four Muhlenberg students: Nico Correa '24, Nathan Thoman '24, Emilio Ramirez '24 and Meistrich. In addition to acting in the film, Correa, Thoman and Meistrich produced the film while Ramirez is its cinematographer. Through Big Lettuce Productions, YRK has been able to take

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# The Red Door Play Festival is once again a hit

BY ALMARAH URMAN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

From Oct. 21-22, the Muhlenberg Theatre Association (MTA) took over the Red Door for their semesterly Red Door Play Festival (RDPF). This event is entirely student-run, from coordinators to directors, stage managers and actors. This time, it featured eight short plays of various genres.

The Red Door is a unique venue in the sense that it doesn't have a traditional stage or backstage area for plays to be produced on. As such, RDPF directors were tasked with adapting material to the performance space.

One of these eight plays was entitled "Stop/Over," and followed just two actors, playing former lovers, as they spend thirty-one hours together during a lay-over in New York City.

"'Stop/Over' was a challenging piece to stage, period—it spans about a dozen different places (give or take) over just 30 minutes. The biggest challenge was finding ways to differentiate those spaces physically in a space like the Red Door with minimal sets and lighting," said Emily Lang '23, who took on the task of directing this piece. "We played a lot with the architecture of the space, as well as with different levels. I had the actors standing, sitting on chairs, lying on the floor and wandering around the stage, just to name a few of these choices!" From the thunderous applause following the showings, it seems that her creative staging choices were well received.

The Red Door plays were not only limited in staging abilities but also faced time constraints. There were about four weeks



Photo courtesy of Caro Sutton-Schott '24

Steven Belloise '25 and Ariel Noble '23 in "Sorry, Wrong Number" by Lucille Fletcher, directed by Robin Title '25.

between casting and performances, including technical rehearsals. Since many of the pieces performed dealt with heavy topics and themes, the directors faced the challenges of dealing with this content in a limited time frame. "Stop/Over" contained material relating to drugs and addiction as well as handling complicated feelings of love and grief, and Lang was faced with the prospect of guiding her actors through this.

"The biggest challenge was being able to touch all the material in a meaningful way. I really wanted to have those conversations about the text and the characters with my actors before we got on our feet, but that definitely cut into the amount of time we needed to stage the piece. We

were still putting finishing touches on the piece the night before the first performance! I do have to applaud my actors on this front; Rowan [Joyce '24] and Henry [Floquet '25] were so willing to put the time and focus into making something we were all proud of and interested in putting on stage and they were so willing to play in rehearsal!" Lang reflected.

The RDPF is also a great opportunity for students to try out new theatrical roles. The MTA provides any student the opportunity to apply to direct/stage manage or audition. Many of the pieces are also student-written, including "Fair Trade," directed by Josh Freeman '23 and written by Taylor Reed '23.

Freeman shares many of the same sen-

timents that Lang expressed about the difficulties the nature of the festival poses, "I have always wanted to try out directing and Red Doors was a phenomenal opportunity to do so. The space is a little bit of a challenge but I was able to work it out. The play I chose was... a small-scale show that fit perfectly in the Red Door space. One of the big challenges this year was we had a shorter time frame to prepare the show due to the holidays and fall break being in the middle of our time window. This meant the actors had abbreviated time to really immerse themselves in the text and memorize their lines. All of the actors did a phenomenal job! I am really happy how my show turned out and I loved watching everyone else's work."

Based on audience reactions, all of the directors succeeded in overcoming these difficulties to put on some incredible plays. Each piece truly brought the Red Door to life in a new and exciting way.

"The cast was wonderful and it was really great to see everything come together. I'm very proud of them all!" says Oy Adebajo '24, writer and director of "The Stories We Tell To Cope."

The credit cannot go entirely to the directors, as the actors put on some incredible performances as well, all of which were appreciated by the directors and audience.

Sydney Holliday '23, who portrayed Eleanor in "Thin Kisses and Vengeful Skies" written and directed by Johnny Veglia '24, expressed, "I always think the Red Doors is such a fun performance experience, especially this year. It was really fun to kind of figure out how we get all these plays together in two weeks. And just being able to work with such a short timeline and realizing how much you could get done."

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shout-out to the roommates of the musicians, garnering laughs from the audience. After the show, Robertson told The Weekly, "Music, for me, has been the socially acceptable way to scream your head off while still seeming like a human."

The event's third singer was Marie Tohill '25—a DJ for WMUH—who said, with her guitar brandished at her side, "This is a really great experience for songwriters," referring to how the Radio Riff-Off allows musicians to have a space to perform.

Oy Adebajo '24 was the fourth performer with their song "Gerard the Bard." "I really got into it," Adebajo commented, recalling the rhythmic drum beats and powerful tone of voice they used.

Rachel Gesner '24 was the fifth to take the stage with her song "Stuck Inside My Head." Gesner subsequently told The Weekly, "It was so exciting, I haven't performed in a while."

The Radio Riff-Off's sixth performer, Kristen Barbarito '25, has been writing songs for four years. Barbarito captivated the crowd with her song on the piano. Afterwards, she noted that the experience was scary at first but that "Warning Label" was one of her favorite songs she's ever written.

The seventh and final artist was Niamh Sherlock '23, who has been writing her own music since she was seven years old. Sherlock finished her song with a flourish of the guitar and a smile. She commented afterwards saying, "It was less overwhelming than I thought it would be," and added that she'd never gotten to do a live show performing her own songs before, which made tonight especially fun.

Once all singers had performed, the audience members were tasked with dropping a red ticket into one of seven festively-fall buckets, each representing one artist. Whichever person's bucket held the most tickets after five minutes won an encore and the title of "Fan Favorite." In the meantime, Muhlenberg-renowned artist and former Radio Riff-Off winner Luke McIntyre '25 performed three of his original songs. After his performance, he told The Weekly that it felt good to be up there. "I loved it last year," he said. "It was the first place I got to show myself as an artist." After all tickets had been accounted for, with a dramatic drumroll, it was announced that Tohill was deemed the "Fan Favorite." She performed a second song of hers, "Grape Vine," and later told The Weekly, "I was thrilled—I loved each song equally and I was glad to do them both." Tohill added that it was a very fulfilling experience. The night

didn't stop there. The three judges, Riley Wexler '24, Adjunct Professor of Media and Communication Gina Sierzega, and freelance performer and educator Mike Lorenz, had chosen the official winners of the 2022 Radio Riff-Off.

Sherlock took third place, Barbarito took second place, and Tohill won first place, guaranteeing her a recording session and the opportunity to be the main act of January's Radio Riff-Off. The crowd cheered wildly for each artist and demanded a speech from Tohill. She announced that she has only been writing music since last semester and encouraged the crowd to pursue their musical endeavors as well.

After the show, co-MC Harper Hogan '25 noted that this was her first experience organizing Radio Riff-Off. She took on a big position as an organizer this year and was "so happy to see the excitement in the Muhlenberg community."

Ash, who remarked that they'd been working on the event since May, added that, "It was a relief to be up there and see how many people showed support for their friends." Audience member Sam Bitterman '26 commented, "It was wonderful to see the great original talent of Muhlenberg students, and hearing their personal stories in the songs was definitely inspiring."



Photo by Rachel Fuchs '23

Spoiler alert! Marie Tohill '25 wowed the crowd at WMUH Radio Riff-Off, winning both "Fan Favorite" and first place overall!



FROM **BIG** PAGE 5

their ideas and turn them into a film.

When one walks into Thoman and Correa's MILE house, they become fully immersed in the alternate reality of "MILE House 69." The house isn't a house anymore but a set. The walls are covered with newspaper and graffiti, lights are hung everywhere, and extras in pink masks and white tank tops are milling about, coming in and out of the house with props.

In between takes, members of YRK were able to explain what went into planning this film. Thoman said that the idea for this movie "came over a year ago during our freshman year. I remember the four of us were looking at the map of the College which has all the housing and buildings numbered. We were looking through them and saw that there's a MILE house 60. I was like, 'I wonder if there's a mile of 69?' So, we go down to 69. And there isn't. It's a different type of housing. We're like, that sounds like a buddy cop movie. MILE house 69." Meistrich jumped in, adding, "It's true, I remember writing down on a piece of paper 'MILE House 69,' old cop evil violent or something and new fresh face cop."

Thoman continued, "Jamen [Meistrich] wrote the whole script over the summer, and we wanted to do it our sophomore year, but the amount of ambition that this project was going to require just wasn't available. We didn't have the available funds, the MILE house and the time to be able to do it. So, we started this year and by week two, we decorated this whole house and prepared it for the takes that we were going to do and it's been like this for like a month and a half." They incorporated their entire MILE house for the



Photo courtesy of Big Lettuce Productions

Muhlenberg film collective ask the big questions with their new film, such as "What if there was a MILE house 69?" Learn more @biglettuceproductions on Instagram.

shooting of their film and in total, it took about 16 hours to put together the set.

The making of this film isn't associated with the College, it is an independent project. Thoman explained that, "This ambitious project is something that can't be done through the school's outlets, through the equipment that they have and the budget. We have 10, 30, 50 people involved in this, students from all over, actors and not, who want to be in movies and want to do film but that outlet doesn't exist. The equipment isn't there. Their budget isn't there. If we could go through the school's channels to get funding and make this more legitimate in the eyes of the school, we would. It's not even about jumping through hoops, it's just like—those hoops don't even exist." The four of them had to create a Go-Fund-Me to raise about \$5,000 for the equipment they needed for the film. YRK also chose not to petition to the Student Government Association (SGA) for funds. Meistrich

explained, "We don't find that the SGA is supportive of artists generally and we didn't feel like explaining ourselves and our vision to them when we can just do it without their help. Their input was not welcome [nor] needed."

The equipment being used in this film is worth thousands of dollars and are the kind used on professional sets. There are dozens of students involved. They have a script supervisor, camera operators, students controlling the lights and sound. Outside of shooting they have editors and social media managers. Larry Meistrich, father of Jamen Meistrich and executive producer, commented that "This is becoming a professional shoot and the school should know more about it." Thoman expressed that, "So many different creative outlets are being put into this, and if anything I think that's why this is so important, because of how many creative fields are culminated in this project and how many people can shine through

this because it does take a village."

Meistrich then proceeded to add, "It's not a short process that you just say, 'Hey, let's get everybody together for a couple hours on a weekend.' This is heavily prepped, and now there's an endless stream of people coming every weekend. There were 20 extras here today." In regards to having so many students involved, even if they're an extra, Meistrich explained that "It's hard. You gotta text people and reach out and ask for people's schedules." He has an entire system on his laptop dedicated to schedules and planning the goals for each weekend in terms of the scenes he wants to get done. He also added that working on this project has "been hard, it's been stressful, it's literally all I think about. I've woken up dreaming about shot lists."

Correa said that working on this is "a lot of fun. It's really rewarding because I love to work with people and put people together so everybody can shine in their own areas. It's also exciting to learn [a] new craft because I've been doing film for a while with YRK but ultimately, it's new to me because I'm more of a writer. And it's also rewarding to be there for the beginning part of the process and watch something develop and grow."

Carlin, who plays the role of Deanna McMeat, said, "It's really fun seeing how much effort the crew and the cast has been putting into this film and this production. It's been a lot of fun. It's been pretty crazy and hectic, but we always get the job done at the end of the day."

As for advice for students wanting to make their own film independently, Meistrich '24 says to "Do it. Don't be afraid, just do it. Even if it's bad, do it again."

Photo by Maddi Whiting '23

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**PAIGE'S PAGE  
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# Paige's Page

BY PAIGE WEISBURG  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Hey besties! Welcome to this week's edition of Paige's Page! If you happened to be at the SIT Open Mic Night on Friday—a special hello to you! I decided to do a test run for Paige's Page Live, and, not to toot my own horn or anything but I kind of slayed \*hair flip.\* There, I was asked a fantastic relationship question, and that seems to be something that is at the forefront of all of your minds right now, so let's get into it!

**Q** Hi Paige! I am a Sagittarius and the guy I am interested in is a Capricorn. I feel like we're doomed to fail. Am I being paranoid?

Hey bestie! I love this question so, so, so much! I actually have never gotten an astrology question here, so I am so excited that I am getting one now! As a Sagittarius myself, I have mixed feelings about this. I tend to be attracted to the same few zodiac signs, and Capricorn happens

to be one of them, despite the fact that I typically don't get along with them on a personal level. Even though I have a deep love for astrology, I don't really believe in astrological compatibility (don't tell the astrology haters). I think that you may not be doomed to fail and here are some reasons why \*astrologically.\* As a Sagittarius, you are probably spontaneous and maybe impulsive when you want to be, you may be outgoing, but you need your alone time to recharge; on a night out, you enjoy getting ready and maybe a side adventure. This person, as a Capricorn, might be more stable or structured in their day-to-day lives, they may like a plan and they want to stick to it; they might appreciate the art of the Irish goodbye. You can bring alternate features out of each other. You might learn to really need their grounding, and they may really need your ability to live in the moment. You aren't paranoid to think this won't work, you're probably just scared about the possibility of committing to something like many of us Sagittarius' happen to be.

**Q** Hey Paige, online dating???

Hi bestie! This is not a question... however I have wanted to talk about this so I will be doing that now. I touched lightly on this in Paige's Page a couple of weeks ago, so I will try to not repeat myself. I hate the concept of online dating with a burning passion, and that is partly because I want to have a meet-cute or be set up by my friends with someone who isn't creepy or rude. On top of that,

I am the worst texter and I am not really looking for a pen pal, and it kind of feels too much like a game. I think online dating works wonderfully for a lot of people. I know so many people that met their significant others on Tinder, Bumble, Hinge, etc. Some people; however, just aren't built for that, and that is how I see myself. I love seeing people I know on these apps though because I find it really interesting to see how they want others to perceive them, but then I realize they are probably thinking the same thing about me which is terrifying. I have two major pieces of advice about online dating from my limited experience. I can really only tell you what I do and do not like. Firstly, if you are in a class with someone and you have never once spoken to them, do not like them on Hinge (especially not several times), they do think it's weird and they will tell your whole class about you. Secondly, don't lie if you aren't actually looking for something with people that are. It's weird and being inauthentic hurts you more than it hurts the person whose time you are wasting. I don't know if this was helpful at all so let me know!

Hi Paige, I want to be more confident and take more initiative in my love life but I

**Q** am scared to approach men I don't know when I go out because I don't know if they are in a relationship and I don't want to embarrass myself. How do I deal with this?

Hey bestie! This is such a fantastic question! Good for you for wanting to

take control of situations where you do not traditionally have the upper hand, I think this is so cool! I personally do not have much experience with this because I go about this very differently, but I think the basics are the same. I would start by asking myself a couple of questions:

1. Does this person look like they are here with another person?
2. Does this person look like they are open to other people talking to them?
3. Do they seem to be looking in your general direction?

If you think you have answered these questions in a way that leads you to the conclusion of TALK TO ME then go for it! Taking that power comes with the possibility of rejection, so that is something you have to be able to deal with a little bit. If the worst thing they say is that they are in a relationship, then you can say OK and move on with your life. I think the positives outweigh the negatives in this situation, so just go for it, maybe something fun can come out of it.

Paige's Page Live is officially happening! Nov. 10 at 10 p.m. in the Red Door! Can't wait to see you all there!

You can submit questions to <https://tinyurl.com/paigespagequestion>. It will also be linked in my Instagram bio— @paigeweisburg and in The Muhlenberg Weekly Instagram Linktree.

# Songs and speculation

## *How Taylor Swift's sexuality divides a fandom*

BY KATHERINE CONLON  
CO-NEWS EDITOR

With the release of Taylor Swift's tenth studio album, "Midnights," questions surrounding the singer's sexual orientation are stronger than ever. It is hard for any Swiftie to go on TikTok and not see self-described "Gaylors" relaying theories about Swift's relationships, scouring songs for queer-coded messages and analyzing pictures of her with female "friends."

While rumors that Swift is attracted to women have been circulating since the 2010s Tumblr era, they have become increasingly common in the last year. In a now deleted video, prominent Gaylor theorist @KALES stated, "Us Gaylors, we are Ukraine... You just handed Russia [a] nuclear bomb." So, who is "Russia" in this TikToker's problematic analogy? That would be the "Hetlors," those that take Swift's statements and lyrics at face value.

The amount of evidence amassed by Gaylors is not unconvincing. For example: the rhyme scheme in "The Very First Night," the themes in "Ivy" and her songs written "from a man's perspective" all undeniably have sapphic undertones. However, ethical concerns arise when one considers the implications of certain



PHOTO FROM @TAYLORSWIFT ON INSTAGRAM

Gaylors' actions. If Swift didn't have her celebrity status and large amount of social capital, would the efforts of Gaylors be seen as a form of outing?

This is not without push back from Swift herself. In a clip describing a new track "Lavender Haze," Swift noted that "my relationship for six years—we've had to dodge weird rumors... and we just ignore it." While it is not inherently wrong to express curiosity about a celebrity's romantic life, actively profiting both socially and financially from postulations regarding someone's potential queerness is morally questionable. To be clear, the problem is not those that delve into the

rich subtextual, possibly queer, meanings in Swift's work, it is those that outright reject and slander differing views.

So, if you want to build an entire brand around Swift's "Anti-Hero" status, don't reference Karlie Kloss, Diana Agron or Swift's fiddle player from her teenage years. Instead, attack her carbon emissions or neoliberal faux-activism. Even better, criticize the "Midnights" album promotion for being more focused on merch than music. All-in-all, no one deserves to have their sexual experience nitpicked on the Internet for millions to judge.

"Shade never made anybody less gay," but is Taylor?

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor ([bergweeklyoped@gmail.com](mailto:bergweeklyoped@gmail.com)) or the Editor-in-Chief ([weeklyeditor@gmail.com](mailto:weeklyeditor@gmail.com)) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.



# Wanna go to Target?

BY LILY MAGOON  
STAFF WRITER

After a long week of classes, meetings, and the myriad of other things Muhlenberg students commit themselves to, it's important to make time for a little bit of self-care. For many of the girls, gays and theys, this means a trip to Target.

This isn't your typical retail-therapy; however, in fact it's entirely possible that one such Target-goer will walk out without spending anything at all (apart from the mandatory Starbucks, of course). A Target trip "for the vibes" has become an activity in and of itself, totally irrespective of whether or not you want/need something there. It's unclear exactly when this phenomenon began, but a quick search on TikTok will assure you not only of its existence, but its ubiquity.

If this is a new concept for you, it's possible you can't picture what it is exactly all these people are doing at Target if not shopping. It's true that more often than not a vibe-centered trip to Target does result in a purchase of some kind, but actually buying something is more of a garnish; it enhances the experience, but it's hardly the whole meal.

Every Target routine is different, based on the location and the individual, but the typical beginning to your journey is a stop for Starbucks, wherein even the most hardened black coffee drinkers may embrace their inner middle-schooler and spring for the cotton-candy frappuccino. After that the possibilities are endless; perusing clearance, smelling candles,

feeling old when you don't recognize half the characters in the toy aisles and dozens of other activities simple enough that you don't have to think too hard but not so unstimulating that you're bored. You can go alone if you're in need of some main-character-inner-monologue time, or with friends as a way to catch up. Either way, going to Target provides a low-energy alternative to staying in.

So, why Target?

I think Target's success as an activity can be traced back to the mall culture of the 80s, 90s and early 2000s. Malls gave us the opportunity to leave the house and have an experience without having to pay, and frequently at a fairly low overall expense. When this mode of shopping fell out of style, replaced by e-commerce, there remained a gap in the market for the kind of low-commitment activity they had provided; enter Target. Their partnership with Starbucks in 1999 may have been the key element to their later success, recreating the food court experience in miniature.

In fact, the small scale of Target as an activity is a big reason why it has become a form of self-care for so many. The atmosphere of Target is very different from a mall, and even other big box stores like Walmart. They've recently switched from fluorescent lights to LEDs, which are easier on the eyes, and the large carpeted areas in their clothing sections keep noise levels low, resulting in a more calming environment.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @B-MORERETAIL ON FLICKR



## enACT what's the sustainabili-TEA?

BY THE ENACT ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
EDITED BY MADDIE DAVIDSON

### Overview

Welcome back to enACT's What's the Sustainabili-TEA Column! You can expect semi-weekly columns providing bite-sized updates on how sustainability is playing a role on our campus. For more information on this week's content, email enact@muhlenberg.edu or check out our instagram @enact.berg!

### The TreeHouse is Back

The TreeHouse, Muhlenberg's sustainability themed house sitting next to the community garden, is active again after being used for regular student housing for two years. Its' four members have

initiated various programs and events including a Welcome-Back Picnic, MILE composting and Permaculture Garden Restoration! If you want to organize a program in our space, contact mdavidson@muhlenberg.edu!

### The Green Team

The "Green Move-In" is an initiative that aims to reduce the overwhelming cardboard waste by utilizing student volunteers, otherwise known as the Green Team, to collect and properly recycle cardboard boxes during freshmen move-in. This year, over 35 volunteers gathered just under 2,000 lbs of cardboard. enACT and Muhlenberg's sustainability committee is working with HRL to further enhance the Green Move-In program through more thorough signage and in-



## Listen Loudly

A creative space for marginalized voices



## tired of growing (freestyle)

BY MARIA CASTILLO  
STAFF WRITER

why at twenty, do i feel like i done  
all the living i can do for now

been running my whole life

it feels like fun was for a brief moment.

when i am alone, time is frozen

most of this time i escape into my mind

the world has become too loud.

call me ungrateful,  
but maybe it is all becoming.

use the word maybe cause i know every-  
thing, but only when its going my way.

don't got a clue presently.

all i crave now is my own safety

why she ain't provide it for me?

been feeling too naked as of lately.

that used to be my armor,  
so maybe i have become irreconcilable.

i grew tired of growing.

it's exhausting actually.

why can't we just stay for awhile?

all these phases of losing and gaining,  
the repetitive cycle

while the world tells me to hold it  
all together.

how good of a front can we put up today?

now maria, you know this not no crying  
club

no more tissues, he just hand out dubs

too many just like to talk  
but not saying shit, there is no longer  
any meaning.

and i'm the crazy one?  
the "bitch" that like to talk a lot.

found myself catching my breath  
to see what happens when i let go.

this time my heart beats slower

am i still too smart for my own good?

twenty oh twenty,  
babygirl you right where you supposed  
to be.

just don't get too lost on your way to vic-  
tory.

teractive education.

### Weigh the Waste

'Weigh the Waste' is an initiative organized by the Dining Hall Sustainability Interns that aims to raise awareness around daily food waste in the dining hall by collecting and weighing common waste that gets sent back into the kitchen. Over the span of 30 minutes, they collected a total of 78.49 lbs of food waste, some of which included full meals that were then wrapped and displayed to demonstrate the frequency of food waste. Some recommendations for more sustainable interaction with our food are 1) using the to-go boxes for leftover food and 2) take what you think you'll eat and go back for seconds if your body tells you to. If you'd like to volunteer to collect and weigh food at the next program on Nov. 16 from 12:30-1 p.m., email lpasco@muhlenberg.edu

### Terracycle Is Coming To Campus

Terracycle is an international recycling company that partners with popular

brands to fund the collection and up-cycling process of dirty, hard-to-recycle plastics. This Halloween, enACT is piloting their candy wrapper program in Seegers Union! Keep your eyes out for a cardboard box and its accompanying flier describing the program guidelines! In other news, we're initiating a second collection through the TreeHouse of Red Solo Cups and other #6 plastics. So far, we've collected over 100 cups and connected with four Greek life organizations excited to participate.

### enACT Updates:

World Vegan Day Baking (costumes encouraged) - 7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., Oct. 31, Hillel Kitchen  
World Vegan Day Tabling - 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., Nov. 1, Seegers Union  
Sustainabilit-TEA Meeting - 7 p.m. - 8 p.m., Nov. 3, Hillel Basement  
Recycling Bingo w/ MAC (Win Sustainable Prizes!) - 7 p.m., Nov. 18, Event Space



# Mules volleyball fights for Centennial Conference crown

*Final stretch of regular season brings hope of playoff berth.*

BY ROCCO CORRADINI  
ROOKIE WRITER

The Muhlenberg volleyball team's season is starting to ramp up with the Mules sitting at (13-10) overall and a (5-4) Centennial Conference record. Volleyball's latest feat is an impressive (3-1) win over Haverford College on Oct. 12. Looking forward into the season, there is ever growing optimism that this team can get over the hump. Led by Head Coach Rob McVickor, nicknamed "MVB," the team is looking to make some headlines. The win over Haverford on Oct. 12 raised the Mules' confidence level and cemented them as an inter-conference threat. Caley Tereska '23 stated, "The Muhlenberg volleyball team this season, in my opinion, is the strongest in terms of our chemistry and athletic ability. We have such a strong-willed, focused and driven group of ladies who truly care for one another on and off the court." When asked about the Haverford win, she adds, "Conference games have illustrated tougher competition where our team is forced to play to the best of our abilities. I am proud of the way that we started our season off strong and continue to improve in practice and compete against teams of a high caliber."

The Mules stat sheets are filled with success from Emma Eglinton '23, Julia Ficon '24 and Esmae Oehler '25. Eglinton

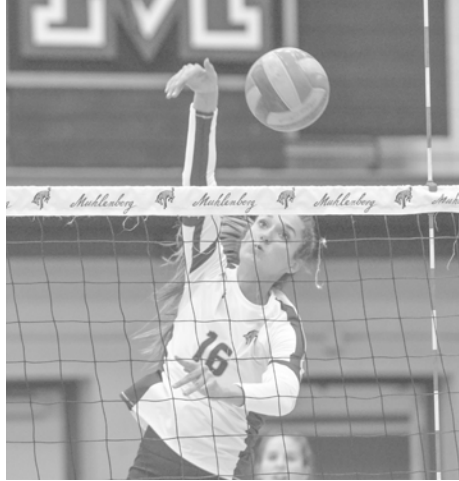


PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS

Christina Marcin '25 smacks it over the net.

has a whopping 622 assists on the season and sits at second overall in the conference with 8.32 assists per set. Oehler leads the team in kills with a total of 224, which sits at third in the conference. Other notable stats from the team come from Christy Marcin '26 with 3.46 kills per set, which ranks third in the conference and Alyssa Faville '24 conference leading 399 digs.

Placed at seventh in the conference through seven conference matches, the Mules sit only one game behind Haverford for that coveted sixth seed in the conference. In this case, the top six seeds

qualify for the playoffs. With the playoffs the obvious intention, the Mules will be playing hard against some tough competition near the end of their regular season.

"I know that beating Haverford was a big win, as they were ranked #2 in the conference. I am optimistic based on what I've seen the team is capable of," defensive specialist Camila Leyes '26 says. The ultimate goal of MVB is to compete at a high level. They believe that they can only go up from here. Looking forward, the Mules have conference matches against the Bryn Mawr College Owls, the Washington College Shorewomen, and the Franklin & Marshall College Diplomats. If the Mules can win out there is a great opportunity to clinch a playoff appearance. The Mules will try to lock in and move on.

Earlier in the season, the Mules had multiple players out with injuries. During this time, the Mules still played well based upon their record. Now, almost all of these players are healed and raring to get into game action. When prompted with how the injuries have affected the team, Tina Dalton '24 said, "One of our key hitters [Marcin] is coming back from an ankle injury so we're looking to come strong for the rest of the season." Dalton, having also had to recover from an ankle injury of her own added, "With the potential we have this season, we're looking into making the playoffs."

Eglinton leads the charge for the Mule squad. She is a vocal leader, always brings the energy and always picks up her teammates. When she isn't cracking jokes on the court, she is more serious than anyone when it comes to game time. She explained, "Our best wins come when we are playing with confidence and having fun. It will be important to sustain energy and poise in the remaining games of our season. Our conference is made up of very competitive teams, and since we are all strong, each game is up for grabs. Looking ahead, I'd love to be able to finish up the regular season winning the rest of our Centennial Conference match-ups. It would be great to finish in the top half of the Conference."

Since the match against Haverford, Muhlenberg volleyball has squared off against four opponents and brought their overall record to (13-10). Following their disappointing double header loss on Oct. 15 to both Johns Hopkins University (0-3) and Eastern University (0-3), the Mules bounced back in their next two matches beating Bryn Mawr College (3-0) on Oct. 19 and Washington College (3-0) on Oct. 22. At the time of publication, Thursday Oct. 27, Muhlenberg volleyball will have played against Franklin and Marshall College on Oct. 26. The Mules final match of the regular season will be on Oct. 29 against Arcadia University.

## An important collaboration

*Voices of Strength and Head in The Game come together.*

BY OLIVIA OBERMAN  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

Uncomfortable conversations often yield opportunities for productive change and heightened awareness. On Sunday, Oct. 23, the campus organizations Voices of Strength (VOS) and Head in The Game held a collaboration meeting which aimed to discuss healthy versus unhealthy relationships within athletics.

Arden McHugh '25, a current VOS intern, explains "VOS is a peer education group under the Prevention Education Department dedicated to preventing sexual, gendered and intimate partner violence." VOS members undergo 32 hours of training in order to best implement their preventative practices related to consent, sexual health, how to

access services on and off campus, intimate partner violence and sexual harassment and misconduct. Their outreach to the Muhlenberg community has sparked open conversations within the student body and has encouraged inter-student connections. VOS Intern Isabel Molettieri '23 states, "Through these connections we are able to build trust with students and serve as a confidential resource on campus that students can rely on if they need advice, have a question or want assistance in dealing with a difficult situation without having to make any reports to the school."

Head in The Game was founded by Joel Hark '22 and has since been succeeded by current president Sara Peretti '23, cap-

SEE COLLABORATION PAGE 11

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# Basketball is back at Memorial Hall

BY DYLAN ROSENBLATT  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

**“Towards the end of last season, we really put a focus on buying into your own individual role.”**

The men’s basketball team has recently started practicing for their upcoming season. The season opener tips off against Moravian University on Tuesday, Nov. 8. Following a disappointing 2021-2022 season—when the team finished with an overall record of (9-16) and eighth in the Centennial Conference (after starting third in the preseason poll)—the Mules are expecting to have a much better result to their 2022-2023 season.

One of the main reasons the team didn’t meet their expectations last year was because they lost their preseason All-American point guard, Dan Gaines ‘22 currently enrolled in Muhlenberg College School of Graduate Studies, to injury eleven games into the season. Now with Gaines fully healthy and returning for a fifth year, the team looks to follow his lead throughout the season. “With Dan returning back this year, he will make it much easier for the rest of the team, he’s got a lot of talent and experience,” says forward Brandon Goldberg ‘23. He went on to say that Gaines “may not be the loudest guy on the court, but he leads by example by going hard in practice and always having a positive attitude. I didn’t get to play with Dan at all last year because of his injury so I’m very excited to step on the court with him this year. He’s going to make it a lot easier for us since he draws so much attention on offense.”

During Gaines’ sophomore year, the team had a very successful season in which they finished with a record of (19-8) and a trip to the semifinal round of the Centennial Conference playoffs. Gaines

talked about how the team can reach that level of success again saying, “[Last year,] I think that even though our record showed otherwise, as a team, we were still able to build on the positive things that came from my sophomore season. Towards the end of last season, we really put a focus on buying into your own individual role.” Each player’s individual investment led to the realization of the team’s overarching goals.

Guard Jayson Williams-Johnson ‘25 speaks for the team and their goals when he says, “We want to win the championship, but we have a lot of other goals and expectations. One is just improving from last year. We have a lot of guys who can make an impact and help us do that this year. And yes, of course we want to win the conference, but there are a lot of tough teams in the Centennial Conference. So, we all have to lock in as a team to achieve that goal.”

Raising a conference championship banner in Memorial Hall requires a tenacious team that is unwilling to let up the intensity throughout the entirety of practices and games. Goldberg emphasizes, “we just started team practices on Oct. 15, but we’ve been playing pickup together three times a week since the start of the school year. This has helped us create team chemistry and has allowed us to gel together. We’ve started to figure out everyone’s strengths and weaknesses, which has made the transition into practice a lot easier for us. Not only has it helped our team chemistry, but it has helped us stay in basketball shape. Many of us on the team feel like we’re in the best shape of our careers due to lifting three times a week, conditioning practices twice a week, and then also playing pickup. I’m looking forward to a very good season and think we can make a serious run with the talent we have.”

Their first home game of the season is on Nov. 12, 2022 versus the Susquehanna University River Hawks at 2 p.m.

## Player spotlight: One last ride

BY TOM HILLER  
MANAGING EDITOR

Daniel Gaines ‘22 isn’t hanging it up just yet.

“Yeah, it was a tough experience that anyone has to go through getting injured,” said Gaines.

The former preseason all-American point guard has decided to return to Muhlenberg for his final year of eligibility. Gaines, going into his 2021-2022 season, garnered a lot of hype and hope that he would carry his squad to much success in the Centennial Conference. Right before the halfway point of the season, however, Gaines suffered a season-ending injury on Jan. 14 against the Dickinson College Red Devils.

“It was obviously disappointing at first, and then throughout the duration of the season, I just tried to help out my teammates as much as I could, knowing I wouldn’t be able to be out there, but just trying to do as much as I could to help the team still,” said Gaines.

From an outsider perspective, the injury spelled the end to a four-year starter, but internally Gaines had unfinished business. Gaines utilized a fifth-year option, a choice many college athletes have used the past two years from the NCAA granting eligibility due to COVID canceling season play. “I think the initial plan going into the year was to do it anyway. But the injury happened and it just solidified it. I wanted to get out there for one more year. I’ve obviously enjoyed playing here with my teammates, as well as playing for the coaches, and also academically, but I just wanted to play to compete. No one really wants to get old,” said Gaines.

With all the awards and accolades Gaines has achieved, one thing has eluded him and his ‘Berg teammates during the last four years—a Centennial title. The Mules have certainly had their chances, during Gaines’ sophomore campaign, his team entered the conference tournament with a (18-7) record, before falling short of the title.

“I think it just all started with winning,” said Gaines. “That’s always the main goal. The accolades are whatever but I think winning is ultimately what I want. And I think [it’s] what my teammates want.”

Going through five collegiate years can change a person, and also add some perspective. For Gaines, he wished he could’ve told his younger self to stop and smell the roses. “I would just say, enjoy the time, enjoy the time and work hard with everything you do. And that’s cliché, but it’s probably the biggest thing.”



PHOTO BY TOM HILLER ‘23

Daniel Gaines ‘22 gears up for final season in Memorial Hall

### FROM **COLLABORATION** PAGE 10

tain of the women’s basketball team. “The goal of Head in the Game is to create a safe space for athletes to discuss their mental health,” says Caley Tereska ‘23—women’s volleyball defensive specialist. Grady Boruchin ‘23, assistant coach of men’s football, adds, “It provides an opportunity for student-athletes to truly speak their minds when we aren’t often given the platform to. You usually find out that your fellow peers are thinking and experiencing the same things as you.” In order to encourage expansion, Peretti has made clear goals for the organization moving forward. “We want to emphasize the community aspect of it rather than it being a formal club. Knowing what I have been through the past four years and seeing my teammates experience similar things, nobody should feel that they are alone and that is why I hold the club near and dear to my heart.” Member of the women’s lacrosse team, Emily Gaffney ‘23, promotes her experience of Head in the Game thus far saying, “I have gained a

larger network of new friends outside my sport but within the athletic community who could relate to me and open up in a safe environment. I find it easier to build deeper connections within this club because of the safe space it provides.”

The meeting between the two organizations was initiated by a five-minute meditation period, which set the tone for deep discussion. Although details of the talk will remain confidential to those selfless enough to tell their stories and motivate discussion, many overarching takeaways were expressed.

One interesting perspective comes from a member of both VOS and Head in The Game, softball player, Sara Fallon ‘23, who says, “I think that being an athlete at Muhlenberg puts us in more high-risk situations, we’re involved in a lot more things and are around a lot more people and so knowing how to navigate healthy relationships [and] learning what signs/flags (red or green) to look for are super important skills to have. I think this collaboration was so important and the meeting flowed so smoothly. I really

hope that VOS gets to [collaborate] more with athletics in the future. Being a part of both groups, I can really see how VOS has educated me and helped me navigate situations as well as help others navigate situations that we, as college students, are frequently faced with.”

Molettieri adds, “Yesterday’s discussion was a great opportunity for Voices of Strength to have a quality conversation with some of Muhlenberg’s athletes and talk about issues that directly affect their day to day lives. It was so rewarding to watch those at the meeting talk openly with each other, relate to each other’s experiences, and offer advice and words of affirmation. This kind of open communication and support is exactly the kind of culture Voices of Strength hopes to create on campus through making the space to talk about these topics; whether that be through events, tabling campaigns or collaboration meetings like this one.”

Both organizations have important events approaching, which may provide the necessary environments for further important conversation. Newcomers are

welcome and encouraged by both groups to join in.

McHugh notes, “We [VOS] are tabling with PHAM and other peer education groups to promote healthy practices on Halloween weekend on Oct. 27 from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. in Seegers! That same day, Prevention Education is hosting speaker Jen Fry who is giving a keynote speech on the 50th anniversary of Title IX. In November, we’re hoping to continue to fundraise for the Allentown Women’s Center by hosting a period pain simulator.”

On Sunday, Nov. 6, Head in the Game will be hosting Muhlenberg College athletic coaches and students alike in an effort to spark conversation about mental health in athletics. Peretti describes the event as an “Open conversation between coaches and student athletes to educate both sides about the many struggles that athletes face everyday.” Peretti continues, “An invitation will be sent to all coaches to participate and all athletes are welcome to pose their concerns and or questions with any of the coaches.”



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## 2022-23 Muhlenberg women's basketball preview

*Mules women's basketball gears up for a championship run.*

By EVAN SCHLOTTERBECK  
STAFF WRITER

One theme the Muhlenberg women's basketball team has for the 2022-23 season is determination.

"We are very determined this year," said shooting guard Rachel Saxton '25. "You know, we're hungry. Coming off of last year, we had a good year and enjoyed it, but we know we can do better. That's just something we want to achieve, improving from last year. We want to show anyone who comes to watch our games that we are ready to compete until the very end."

Last season, the Mules finished (11-14) in the regular season and did not qualify for the Centennial Conference playoffs. That doesn't mean the season was a failure, as the team learned a lot from last year, implementing some promising changes into their practices thus far.

"We spend a large chunk of practice every day working towards having lockdown matchup and help defense," said forward Margaux Eripret '22, who is currently enrolled in Muhlenberg College School of Graduate Studies. "The better our defense is, the easier it is to transition into a good offense."

"We're putting more time into our fundamental skills," commented Saxton. "I think that's going to help us tremendously because not only are we working on the little things, but I think that's going to build us into a stronger team."

The Mules have loads of talent on both sides of the court, but the team is eager to work off individual strengths and create a more cohesive unit on the court. They hope to find success through unselfish basketball this year, a recipe that has proved effective in the past.

"We want to try to play more team basketball than individual basketball," said Saxton. "As we go through our season, it's not going to be about who scores the most points, but how we are doing overall as a team."

Another substantial factor for the team this year will be its chemistry. Team spirit and cohesion must be high going into the first game of the season.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS

Riley Cassidy '26 hones her lateral movement against Mia Fitzgerald's '26 deadly dribble.

"Our friendships and chemistry with each other translate into a familiarity on the court," said Eripret. "We've become so accustomed to playing with each other, and it's helpful to know how each person plays because it leads to us making good plays together."

This year's squad is composed largely of upperclassmen ready to bring their experience to the table and help pilot the team through any adversity they may face throughout the year.

"It's really important to lead by example," commented Eripret. "I always looked up to my upperclassmen when I was younger, and I hope that myself and fellow upperclassmen this year can also set a good example and use our experience to guide the team to be as successful as possible."

The Centennial Conference is one of

the most competitive in DIII. From top to bottom, every team is strikingly skillful and competitive to a high degree, making every matchup a dogfight.

"When it comes to conference play, [we are] very excited to play Gettysburg [College] and Johns Hopkins [University]," expressed Saxton. "They are usually two top teams, and as long as we continue to work hard and focus, we can give them a run for their money, no doubt."

There is a lot to be excited about for this Muhlenberg women's basketball campaign. The team has trained with a relentless work rate, studied the game head to toe, and is keen to sustain this culture going forward.

"We've already made so much progress, and the team is showing a lot of promise for a successful season," said Eripret. "We've seen what we're capable of

doing when we play good team basketball, and maintaining high standards will help us reach our goal of making it to [the] playoffs and winning a championship."

Progress, while great to see in pre-season, will inevitably be measured at the end of the regular season when the Centennial Conference playoffs are set, but the vibe in the locker room is that Muhlenberg women's basketball is a real contender this year.

"I really believe," said Saxton, "and I think if you were to ask any of the other players on our team and our coach, I think that we have the potential to secure a high seed in the conference tournament this season."

Make sure to tune in for the Mules season opener when they travel to Hartwick College on Nov. 12.

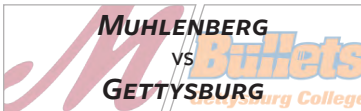
Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Oct. 27 - Nov. 2

### Football



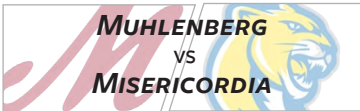
Sat, Oct. 29 @ 1:00 p.m.  
Scotty Wood Stadium

### Men's Soccer



Sat, Oct. 29 @ 4:00 p.m.  
Gettysburg, Pa.

### Field Hockey



Sat, Oct. 29 @ 5:00 p.m.  
Dallas, Pa.

### Volleyball



Sat, Oct. 29 @ 6:00 p.m.  
Glenside, Pa.



Check out photos  
by Maddie Ciliento  
'25 from "Monster  
Mayhem" on  
page 11!



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## NEWS

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## ARTS & CULTURE

Actor, singer and dancer  
Corbin Bleu answers burn-  
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Brianna Kovit '23 revisits  
the past.

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## SPORTS

Men's soccer ticketed  
into centennial playoffs.

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# CA architect had fascist views

BY KATHERINE CONLON  
Co-News Editor

In 1971, Muhlenberg's Board of Trustees approved the initial designs for a new fine arts building, now known as the Baker Center for the Arts. The building's designer was none other than internationally-known architect Philip Johnson whose work includes The Glass House in Connecticut, Manhattan's Sony Tower and the David H. Koch Theater at Lincoln Center. However, the architecture world has recently been coming to terms with Johnson's troubling history with Nazism.

Johnson spent the summer of 1932 in Berlin and was urged by a friend to attend a Hitler Youth rally. Johnson exuberantly described the gathering saying, "You simply could not fail to be caught up in the excitement of it, by the marching songs, by the crescendo and climax of the whole thing, as Hitler came on at last to harangue the crowd." The

architect had similar feelings while engaging with the modernist architectural aesthetic as he did in the presence of Hitler's fascist regime.

After returning to the United States, Johnson possessed a strong desire to construct a fascist party in America, similar to that of Germany's National Socialist party. He abruptly changed his career path to focus more on journalism and politics. Johnson put his faith behind alt-right and blatantly anti-Semitic Catholic priest and radio host Father Charles Coughlin to become the face of American fascism. Johnson designed the platform for Coughlin's 1936 Chicago rally to resemble the stage where he first encountered Hitler four years prior.

Once Hitler invaded Poland, Johnson was the only American journalist selected to travel with the German Propaganda Ministry to cover the war for the publication "Social Justice." Johnson downplayed the horrors of

the war, reporting "99 percent of the towns I visited since the war are not only intact but full of Polish peasants and Jewish shopkeepers."

Johnson began to stray away from these views when other American fascists started facing indictment. He even organized an anti-fascist group on Harvard University's campus, where he was studying as a graduate student. Despite his efforts, word got out, with journalist William Shirer publicly describing Johnson as "The American Fascist" in his 1941 book, "Berlin Diary." When confronted about this, Johnson would blame his fascination with Nazis on his sexuality, saying that he was attracted to the large groups of chiseled blond men in uniforms.

The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York City has found itself reckoning with Johnson's legacy. Johnson was the founding head of the museum's architectural department and in 1984 a series of galleries were dedicated to him. In 2021, the Black Reconstruction Collective designed an exhibit in which they temporarily covered the plaque displaying Johnson's name with a piece of denim fabric that states their manifesto. This occurred after a group of Black architects and artists signed on to a letter addressed to the MoMA which

stated that Johnson "used his office at MoMA and his curatorial work as a pretense to collaborate with the German Nazi party... [Johnson] effectively segregated the architectural collection at MoMA."

Muhlenberg has yet to acknowledge Johnson's past. Mentions of Johnson on the College's website describe him as "internationally acclaimed" and "world-renowned." Johnson was also awarded an honorary degree from Muhlenberg in 1977.

In 1976, The Muhlenberg Weekly reported that students were upset that the Center for the Arts' red brick exterior was being painted white and subsequently threw eggs at the building. While these students were most likely not aware of Johnson's beliefs, one can retrospectively find irony in this act of protest. Perhaps the eggs were deserved, but for a different reason than the students intended.

The Baker Center for the Arts will hopefully stand tall for years to come, but should Muhlenberg continue to ignore the past of the designer behind it? Should the College condemn this architect who once said that Nazis were "daylight into the ever-darkening atmosphere of contemporary America"?



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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The Muhlenberg Weekly strives for accuracy in reporting and writing, but we acknowledge that mistakes happen. Readers are invited to submit corrections about errors in articles, and they should be submitted to weeklyeditor@gmail.com. Corrections are also brought to our staff's attention by our own editors and writers. Our staff will review the suggested correction, consult with the author of the article, and issue the appropriate correction. Online corrections are located at the bottom of the article. Print corrections are located within the paper, on the page indicated in the online edition. However, The Weekly does not grant take-down requests for articles.

## ADVERTISING POLICY

We request that advertising material be submitted by the Monday preceding publication at 5 p.m. If materials have not been received at that time, the advertisement will not run and the advertiser is still responsible for 100% payment. We reserve the right to decline any advertisement that is misleading, inaccurate, fraudulent, or deemed generally unacceptable. This determination will be made by the Business Staff in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief. The Muhlenberg Weekly maintains a distinction between its news & editorial content and advertising. As such, advertisements will not be accepted if they imitate the general style of The Weekly, intentionally or unintentionally. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: headlines, bylines, fonts, and column-arrangements. In order to make this distinction, The Weekly also reserves the right to include the word "advertisement" on any advertisement that is deemed too native.

# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

10/24/2022 The Village: Report of sick student, Allentown EMS responded and transported student to hospital. Chew Street: Report of fire alarm from steam from shower, system silenced and reset.	locker. Tilghman Street: Report of fire alarm from cooking, system silenced and reset. Chew Street: Report to jump start vehicle, Campus Safety Officer successfully started vehicle.
10/25/2022 Baker Center for the Arts: Report of sick student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student transported to hospital by Campus Safety Officer. Chew Street: Report of suspicious vehicle, reporting party spoken to, area checked, investigation to continue.	10/27/2022 Walz Hall: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student refused further treatment or transport.
10/26/2022 Chew Street: Report of possession of drug paraphernalia and alcohol violation, items brought to Campus Safety and placed in evidence	10/28/2022 South Hall: Report of fire alarm from cooking, system silenced and reset.

# Corrections

In a previous edition of The Muhlenberg Weekly, errors were made in the article titled "A dive into Buddhism." Corrections are below:

1. The WorldViews program was previously called the Worldview.
2. Khurram Hussain, Ph.D., was incorrectly referred to as a member of the advisory board of The Worldview Institute. Hussain is a member of the advisory board of the Institute for Religious and Cultural Understanding.
3. Tim Loftus completed a Masters of divinity, and later served as a chaplain within the University of Pennsylvania health system. These credentials were originally omitted.



## Piloting New

## Hours for Java Joe

Effective as of 10/31/22

**Monday – Thursday:**  
**8:30 am – 8 pm**

**Friday:**  
**8:30 am – 6 pm**

*Please note: These hours will be in effect through the end of the fall semester, and will be reevaluated at the conclusion of the semester.*





# Allentown's red line

BY CYDNEY WILSON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

When choosing to purchase a house, there are plenty of factors to be considered. For many, an important element is the quality of the local public schools. In modern day America, systems of housing and education are inextricably linked to one another. In addition to paying your mortgage, homeowners also pay property taxes that fund public schools in their city, which has major consequences for various neighborhoods based on the socioeconomic status of individuals living there. This rings true for the Lehigh Valley, and the Allentown School District (ASD) in particular.

An important factor to consider when thinking about the connection between taxes and school funding is the practice of redlining. Karen Pooley, Ph.D., a professor of practice in the department of political science at Lehigh University and former executive director of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Allentown from 2007 to 2011, teaches courses on city planning, neighborhood and housing issues. Pooley explains that the practice of redlining emerged in the 1930s, and was based on stereotypes of immigrant communities and communities of color that were imposed by banks.

“[Banks] didn’t think really highly of anybody who was on the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder,” she explains. “So if it’s a neighborhood that’s occupied by immigrants or working class [people], or non-white households, the expectation was the neighborhood was on the verge of falling apart, hazardous for future investment. And so these maps very much showed where older housing, where denser housing, where lower income, lower socioeconomic status households are living.”

To identify the places where banks, insurers and the government wanted to avoid investing any money in, maps were created with lines drawn in red to warn against neighborhoods which investors considered hazardous—this is what we

now know as redlining.

“When it came time to figure out where are we going to invest, where are we not going to invest, where are we going to encourage homeowners to buy new houses, where are we going to encourage builders to build, we’re not going to do that in these areas that we’ve designated as hazardous for future investment,” explains Pooley. “So the act of redlining is ‘we’re going to avoid investing in certain areas.’”

Allentown doesn’t have a redlining map, or at least not one that has survived to be examined today. Yet, even without an official red line on a map, investors seem to have drawn that line of their own when it comes to home sales in the city.

“If you look at the school district boundaries, [in] other districts in the county, they’re squares, they’re rectangles,” explains James Wynne ‘23, a 2019 graduate of William Allen High School and current Muhlenberg student who says that this invisible redlining impacted his school district. “[For] Allentown School District, it looks like something you’d see in biology class. It’s ridiculous. And most of that are dilapidated communities with houses and buildings with low property value. And so if you just think about it mathematically, lower quality housing, you’re going to have lower property taxes.”



Pooley summarizes redlining as “disinvesting in denser, more diverse, older places,” a description which aptly fits Allentown.

The existence of the redline has dire consequences on school districts around

the country which depend on property taxes for funding.

“If you’re in an area that has property values that are lower,” explains Nick Miller, an Allentown School Board former vice president and current member, “such as in Allentown versus Parkland, where [there are] nicer houses and the property value is a lot higher, you can tax that at a lower percentage of the higher value property. Whereas in Allentown, the property value is \$80,000 and you’re still taxing it at five percent, that five percent on \$300,000 is a lot more. So that’s where the disadvantage is, especially with a full tax base that’s, on average, lower... It’s across the state that in urban districts that have that issue.”

“In most cases, where you live determines where you go to school,” explains Pooley. “And you don’t get to just show up in a neighborhood and say ‘this school is fabulous, yes, I’d like to go to this one,’ you need to show an electric bill and you need to have proof of residency in that district in order to be able to go. The primary way schools raise money for the things that they do, for the teachers that they pay, and the books that they buy and after school programming, and everything that they do is primarily from real estate tax. So not only do humans have to live in a house to go to a school, but the school gets their revenue primarily from the value of the real estate in that place. So when it works, it works... Where it doesn’t work it’s horrible. So then you have not enough resources to support your schools, schools suffer because [you’ve] got to cut out any of the extras like art or music or things that kids desperately need. Or, not hire enough staff and all of a sudden classes get a little bigger. And so then demand for housing in that district starts to go down because people want to move to where there’s a stronger school.”

The relationship between property taxes and school funding creates a vicious cycle where wealthier people tend to want to live in these cities, which brings in more of their money.

“School districts with higher property

values have more [money] to spend,” explains Michele Moser Deegan, Ph.D., dean of academic life and professor of political science at Muhlenberg College. “And, districts like Parkland and Emmaus have large education funds and booster clubs that support the extracurriculars that Allentown parents can’t afford. The out-of-pocket differences are noticeable if you go to a sporting event or even a theater production. Non-profit foundations do try and help but in the Lehigh Valley, we don’t have a lot of really rich people to give the funds needed to the district and they tend to give to their home district, which is more likely Parkland, Emmaus or Southern Lehigh.”

According to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, the Allentown School District median household income is \$39,820, a vastly different number than the Parkland School District’s median household income of \$84,646. This discrepancy in income is what leads to the discrepancy in availability of resources and extracurriculars in the two school districts.

Additionally, 4.5/10 households in Allentown are cost-burdened (meaning more than 30% of one’s income pays for housing) while 2.6/10 households in the Parkland area are cost-burdened. These numbers demonstrate a significantly greater density of wealth in the Parkland area, and illustrate that there is more loose money to provide more adequate resources to the schools there.

“When you’ve got really high value housing,” says Pooley. “You’ve got a lot of money to support really high quality schools, which only further increases the value of that housing because everybody wants to get in to attend those schools.”

Ultimately, students in the Allentown School District suffer the consequences of politics that are far beyond their control. The historic and contemporary practice of redlining has led to a cycle of generational harm for those who are unable to access the same resources as their neighbors who live mere miles away.

## ‘Berg commemorates Title IX

BY SAMANTHA TEMPKIN  
STAFF WRITER

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination based on sex in educational programs. It requires that people receive equal opportunities, financial assistance and educational benefits regardless of sex. It also protects against discriminatory practices based on sex such as sexual harassment. It has been 50 years since this law was first enacted, but it is clear that there is still a long way to go in terms of reaching gender equality. On Thursday, Oct. 27, a variety of organizations on campus invited social justice educator Jen Fry to share what changes

individuals can make within themselves to make a difference, establishing that “If you don’t see it then you need to do it.” Being a DII athlete and veteran volleyball coach for 15 years, Fry witnessed firsthand that coaches were not stressing diversity, equity and inclusion the way they should be. This led her to focus on teaching student-athletes and administrators alike about what inclusivity means through the lens of sports education.

In her seminar, Fry explained how carrying out the ideals of Title IX starts with individuals’ everyday behavior. The session was highly interactive given Fry’s

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## Dominic Tierney lectures at Muhlenberg College

BY MATTHEW KLINGER  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Last Wednesday Oct. 26, the 2022 Midterm elections series sponsored by the political science department continued with guest lecturer Dominic Tierney, Ph.D., from Swarthmore College. Tierney, who is Oxford educated, provided an outsider’s perspective on American politics having been born and raised in the United Kingdom. His talk focused on two main points. First, he discussed President Joseph Biden’s foreign policies and how they might impact the midterm elections, now less than a week away. He then broadened his talk and touched on American democracy as a whole and what it may look like

going forward.

Tierney began his lecture by tracing Biden’s view on foreign policies throughout his career. He demonstrated how, throughout his fifty-year career in politics, Biden has oscillated between being a hawk—pro-intervention—and being a dove—anti-intervention. As president, Tierney stated, Biden has been more hawkish—something that has been clearly seen with his response to the Ukrainian invasion.

Tierney then went more in-depth saying that Biden’s shift towards a more interventionist policy is not a move that he

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indication that a major part of growth is meeting and leaning on others. Audience members spoke to one another with the many “Pair and Shares” throughout the presentation and were encouraged to share their ideas with the whole group. “If I see you being the lonely llama, I will ask you to leave,” joked Fry, who maintained a light-hearted environment while stressing the importance of uncomfortability in exploring ways people can improve themselves.

Two key topics Fry focused on were self-advocacy and the weaponization of words. Fry asked a variety of questions that made audience members reflect on what has impacted their own self-advocacy and their experiences of others self-advocating, how they use certain words and how certain words are used against them. Specific questions for the audience surrounded how they develop boundaries, have been taught to advocate for themselves, behave in conflict, have had their self-advocacy limited and have limited the self-advocacy of others through the weaponization of words. As she asked these questions, Fry encouraged her audience to think

about what it is about their past experiences that may affect their behavior and what they can do to be better both for themselves and for others in the future. She says, “You have to unlearn stuff in order to be better. If you think that you can’t peel back the layers in order to be a better person, you are dead wrong. You can’t say ‘Well, I don’t have to think about my grandparents or my parents, I can just start learning to be better,’ because you’re never [going to] know what you need to fix to be better. You’re not gonna learn about your biases or the blindspots you have until you start to peel back the layers.”

Fry stressed the importance of self-advocating in a respectful manner, saying “I will tell you, you never deserve to be cussed out... what gives you the right to talk to someone else like that just because you’re angry?” Questions such as “am I scared to make people mad” and “do I want everyone to like me” were among those asked in the self-advocacy portion of the presentation. Fry explained, “If you’re scared to make people mad, you’re gonna put yourself in very dangerous positions. We’re so worried that we will make people mad that we don’t advo-

cate for ourselves... You see in highly, highly male-led organizations, the women in there tend to protect because they’re like... ‘I worked so hard to get here, I need to find a way to keep myself in this position,’ so they’ll protect and protect the institution.” Fry teaches that knowing how to self-advocate and advocate for others prevents issues that fall under Title IX from going under the radar.

Fry went on to establish how the weaponization of words is an act of silencing. Words such as “angry,” “aggressive,” “crazy” and “bossy” are among many that are used against women to stop them in their tracks when they are being assertive. The idea that women who self-advocate are viewed negatively calls for both institutional and individual change, but what does that change look like?

“Students get mad when they don’t see change fast, and I will tell you this, if you see change fast, you’re being lied to...change has to happen so slow because you’re not just changing the wording, but you’re changing how people view the wording. The slower the better, and that sounds so weird, but you should be able to see the progress in it. If [the institutions say] ‘well, we



INFOGRAPHIC BY AYDEN LEVINE '23/PHOTO EDITOR. CREDIT TO MUHLENBERG.EDU

can change this overnight,’ it’s not true, and all they’re doing is really waiting for you to graduate.” Fry continued, “You have to start asking questions that people will give you real answers to, and the first thing is if people are afraid to give the real answers, then that should be a part of the problem... can your students give real answers without repercussions? As students, are you giving actual tangible things you

want to see fixed?”

Jen Fry’s tribute to 50 years of Title IX clearly struck a chord with Muhlenberg audiences and set the precedent for how necessary these events are. “It was very educational, and I learned a lot about myself, which I wasn’t expecting to happen,” says Emily Orlich ‘24. “I thought it started some great conversations and I hope we have more events like it at Muhlenberg.”

# Midterm Madness

BY KATHERINE CONLON  
CO-NEWS EDITOR

The Muhlenberg Weekly is committed to informing the student body about the upcoming midterm election. In our new column, we will outline key races that ‘Berg students can vote in. We have reached out to every candidate for their responses on a couple of critical questions. Below are the responses from the candidates for Pennsylvania’s governor:

## Josh Shapiro:

**Can you briefly illustrate a couple (2-4) of your key policies or issues that you are planning to focus on if reelected?:**

As Governor, my top priorities are creating opportunity for Pennsylvania children by improving our education system, building a stronger economy by creating jobs, cutting taxes and lowering costs and making our communities safer all across the Commonwealth. In order to move Pennsylvania forward and build a better future for our children, we must work together to achieve these key priorities.

A strong economy, good schools and safe communities are the pillars of my vision for Pennsylvania—and making this

our reality will guide everything I do as Governor. I believe there is far more that unites us than divides us—and when it comes to protecting our communities and building a Commonwealth that is the best place for businesses and families to thrive, I’ll work with anybody to get it done.

**How do you think your potential reelection could benefit college students, specifically those at Muhlenberg?**

I’ve been focused on reducing student debt from Pennsylvania families. That’s why, as Pennsylvania’s Attorney General, I took on the predatory lenders and returned \$130 million to Pennsylvania students and families who got screwed and taken advantage of. College shouldn’t mean a lifetime of debt and there should be more opportunities for people who don’t want to go to college. I’m focused on what we can do here in Pennsylvania to make college more affordable and to help Pennsylvanians chart their own course.

## Doug Mastriano:

Mastriano did not respond to The Weekly. On his website, Mastriano describes a “plan” with several major topics involved including: personal freedoms, election integrity, the second

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has made on his own; the Democratic party has swung in the direction of international intervention after being against it in the early 2000s. The Republican party, on the other hand, has become increasingly isolationist. This has been seen primarily with their opposition towards sending aid to Ukraine.

The second half of Tierney’s lecture focused on the challenges facing U.S. democracy this election and in the future. Perhaps one of the most shocking claims that he made during his lecture was that America does better when it is at war: times of conflict are when the U.S. has seen a large increase in both technological and social progress. For example, the women’s suffrage movement gained a significant amount of traction during World War I, and many of the Civil Rights victories seen during the 1960s happened during both the Vietnam and Cold

War. amendment, the right to life, safe and secure communities, illegal immigration and sanctuary cities, parental rights and school curriculum, school safety and women’s sports, school choice, PA’s energy sector, lower taxes, lifting regulations, fiscal responsibility and cleaning up the Harrisburg “swamp.”

Wars.

However, according to Tierney, perhaps more important than the progress made during times of conflict is the problems that arise during times of peace. Tierney said that during times of war, the nation has a common enemy to unite and rally around. However, during times of peace, the U.S. has no common enemy, and thus our anger and annoyance is directed at each other. The result is a public that is in a state of disunion and increasing polarization.

Tierney also brought up another troubling fact: the U.S. has no real national identity around which to orient itself. He shared a story of how at the conclusion of the Cold War, a Russian official lecturing at an American university said, “We are going to do a terrible thing to you. We are going to take away your enemy. Your entire identity is built on the enemy of the Soviets, and we are going to take that away from you.” Since the conclusion of the Cold War, Americans have increasingly felt a sense of confusion over what it means to be American. As a result, the U.S. has no real goal around which to orient itself, stalling progress and sowing division.

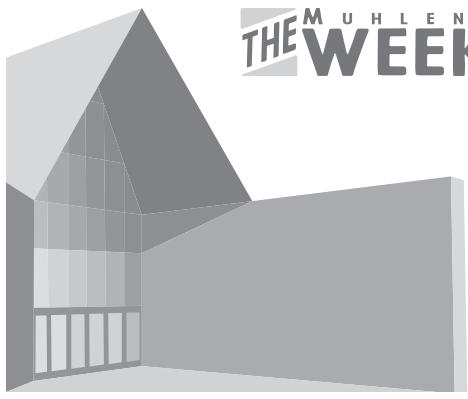
Tierney ended his talk on a somber note. There being no real outside threats to the U.S., he said, does not mean that America and its democracy is safe. Time and time again,

America has stood up to those who have opposed it abroad, whether it be Japan and Germany in World War II, Iraq in the Gulf War or terrorists after 9/11. Instead, the current threat to America is internal. For, as Tierney concluded, “Only America can destroy itself.”

The talk was well received by students. Shinam Hussain ‘25 said that, “The speaker was really engaging. The event as a whole was very interesting and enlightening; I thought it was interesting how he thought that the greatest threat to America was its own people and how foreign and domestic policy is intertwined.”

Harli Strauss-Cohn ‘24 also had a positive view of the event, saying “I thought the event was really engaging and the speaker made historical connections to the modern moment that I had never heard before. I actually really liked how there was no slideshow and the full crown seemed to support engagement and energy. I found the focus of the event to be largely about military strength and initiatives with a huge focus on Western countries. While this is not something that I necessarily like or dislike, I think it is reflective of the political science field in ways where it tends to focus.”





"Mixing one's wines may be a mistake, but old and new wisdom mix admirably."

- Bertolt Brecht

## I actually do dance:

### *Muhlenberg welcomes star Corbin Bleu for Family Weekend*

BY SHINAM HUSSAIN  
STAFF WRITER

For Family Weekend 2022, Muhlenberg's Office of Student Transitions invited actor, singer and dancer Corbin Bleu to campus for a question-and-answer style talk. Bleu is best known for his role as Chad Danforth in Disney's movie franchise: "High School Musical." Bleu has also been on Broadway for his role as Lucentio/Bill Calhoun in the recent revival of "Kiss Me Kate."

The talk was moderated by students, Dylan De Magistris '24 and Sarina Bell '24. The opening question asked Bleu to tell the audience about his journey as an actor. To this, Bleu discussed that he had begun working as an actor at only two years old, describing how he practically grew up in the business. De Magistris stated, "Corbin provided great insights about his career and the performing arts industries. Being a musician, I found his comments to be very impactful and inspiring as I desire to be in the music industry. I was also very lucky to receive some personal feedback from Corbin after the event since I was the moderator."

Bleu detailed how his father was an actor as well, so he followed in his father's footsteps. He also talked about growing up in an arts focused household, stating "Acting was always a passion." This followed into the next question, which asked what his favorite form of art was—music, dance or acting. To the crowd's surprise and interest, Bleu answered with "dance." "Dance is always my first love. When I need to blow off steam, I will dance by myself. I don't care. Still to this day, dance is king for me."

The questions and talk shifted from



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRITNEY JARA '23

Bleu received a warm welcome from Berg students.

Bleu providing insight about his own journey and passion, to advice for aspiring performing arts students. Bleu was asked what advice he would give to the students in the audience that are aspiring for positions in theater, film or dance. Bleu responded, "Your first part is getting the job. Do something different. You are competing against so many people doing the same thing. Don't make the obvious choice. Little things, like dressing the part, make such a difference. After you get the job, be kind. Be respectful. Everyone—including you—is just trying to do their job. Have a good time. Everyone there wants you to succeed. People are behind you. People are rooting for you."

There were a few questions centering around Bleu's role in "High School Musical." Bleu discussed how the entire experience of "High School Musical" was so rewarding at the time, but even more after the fact. He detailed how he was able to return to the original high school

due to being on the current spin-off show, "High School Musical the Musical the Series," and how gratifying his time on the show has been. "It's so surreal," described Bleu, as he later provided anecdotes to the audience about his time as Chad Danforth, including how his favorite songs to film and record were "I Don't Dance" and "The Boys are Back." Sydney Holliday '23 stated, "'High School Musical' was one of the first musicals I did as a kid and now I'm graduating with a theatre B.A. so it was really nice and a nice full circle thing."

The audience was given the opportunity to submit questions, and some were asked during the Q&A. One anonymous audience member inquired what it means for Bleu to be a Black actor today. Bleu responded with gratitude to the person who asked, stating "Growing up, I did not see many people that looked like me. Real representation is extremely important. I've gone up for and played the to-

ken many times. Especially now, regarding the LGBTQ community, there are so many roles that try to fit their checkboxes in one character. I feel like we are finally at a place where that is finally starting to change. After one of my performances, where the entire cast was people-of-color, a girl came up to me, so happy and said, 'I love my people.' That captures it all for me. I'm happy to say that I am a working Black actor."

"My favorite part about the conversation was listening to what it's like being in the theatre and production business while also being a person of color. As someone who's in the same position, I've always struggled finding my place and listening to someone else talk about the impact they've made and the inspiration they've become to other people of color," stated Britney Jara '23.

The audience was engaged and lively throughout the talk, applauding and reacting warmly to what Bleu was saying. Audience member Victoria Brady '25 stated, "Even though I am not a theatre major, Corbin [Bleu] still left advice that is valuable for everyone, to be kind. Respect each other and represent each other. Be yourselves because that is the best version of you you can be." Whether a hardcore fan of Bleu's work or just a casual attendee, those at the event seemed engaged and enlightened by the event.

Eva Vaquera '23 discussed, "I honestly wasn't a big 'High School Musical' fan growing up. It wasn't 'til quarantine that I actually sat down and watched all three movies. So, I came to the event not knowing a lot. I am glad to say that I genuinely enjoyed the event. Corbin [Bleu] was such an engaging speaker, filled with insight. I'm definitely a fan now."

## Marginalized voices highlighted in MTA's annual theatre festival

BY IAN CLARK  
ASST. A&C EDITOR

This past weekend, on Sat. Oct. 29 and Sun. Oct. 30, the Muhlenberg Theatre Association (MTA) held its annual Marginalized Voices Theatre Arts Festival (MVTAF), two days worth of art performed by students highlighting the disenfranchised voices on campus. From

dance performances, staged readings, musical performances and more the festival once more demonstrated the need to elevate lesser-heard voices on this campus, especially within the arts. MVTAF Coordinator Bethany Qian '25 talked about their experience organizing the festival, and how this was their mindset in organizing this year's festival, "As a Chinese American, queer, female theatre major, I don't see anyone else like me on

the campus, and I think it's important for other people who don't feel seen to have a voice and allow themselves to be seen. My hope is that MVTAF can bring awareness to affinity groups on campus, as well as provide a safe space for artists of marginalized identities."

Inclusivity & Equity Chair of the MTA, Gabi McCabe '24, spoke about the festival saying, "This festival is a really truthful and vulnerable space. It's where we get to

see very personal works, celebrations of identity and often shorter works that this festival's format lends itself to. MVTAF opens a space for the Muhlenberg community to hear the stories we might not see uplifted elsewhere."

The festival was kicked off by a staged reading of a short play, "The Talk," by Eric Coble and Darius Stubbs, starring Britney



# Opera in full swing

BY ALMARAH URMAN  
STAFF WRITER

With so many performers at Muhlenberg, it feels like there is always something to go see on campus. Last weekend, and next—Oct. 28 through Nov. 6—the theatre department staged “The Threepenny Opera,” this semester’s full-scale musical directed by department head James (Jim) Peck, Ph.D.

“The Threepenny Opera” is a three-act drama with music that follows Polly Peachum, daughter of Jonathan Peachum, who controls the beggars of Victorian London, as she marries crime-lord Macheath (“Mack the Knife”) against her father’s wishes. Polly’s parents resolve to have Macheath hanged, thus beginning a series of scenes and events full of devastating corruption, dark humor and deceit.

Muhlenberg took the already satirical Bertolt Brecht musical and set it inside a warehouse, adding an additional level of commentary on the flaws of capitalism and allowing it to become an equally sarcastic commentary on sexism. The setting allowed for a visually stunning stage.

“The more recent rise of e-commerce has led to an exponential growth in fulfillment and distribution centers due to the ability for a single trucker’s shift to reach across a region where 40% of US consumers reside,” states Assistant Director Lauren Koranda ‘23, in the program notes. “In Threepenny, the characters’ statuses as members of the proletariat and the human cost of their labor throughout the play provoke consideration of the hidden and often unacknowledged violence at the core of capitalist labor relations. As we move from an industrial to a consumer economy, Brecht and Hauptmann offer new ways for us to think about how an economy rooted in warehousing shapes workplace environments from warehouse workers of the Lehigh Valley to the broad-

er working class.”

“I really like the set. I think that the idea of putting it in a shipping yard is really cool, and I also like the use of lighting in and throughout the production,” said Samantha Freed ‘26, during the show’s second intermission. She was not alone in this sentiment.

“The way the themes of the show were linked to the capitalist and industrial past of the Lehigh Valley was incredible, especially in terms of the production design being in the style of a warehouse. It allowed for a lot of interesting creative interpretations of the text throughout the show that added style but also brought a new layer of subtext to the show overall” says Ian Clark ‘25.

While the final product of the show was well received, the actors and creative team certainly had a challenge in the task of bringing such an intricate show and concept to life.

“From a backstage perspective it has been great to see how many designers and crew members have been putting so much energy and thought into Threepenny,” said Alena Craig ‘24, assistant costume designer.

“Working on ‘Threepenny’ has been an absolute ball... It is a rare and special privilege to play [Polly] in all of her strangeness and messiness and beauty. This process has allowed me, as an actor, to focus on such specific details of the show itself and my own performance, as well as to be completely and utterly free, which seems oxymoronic. Every word and moment in this show has to be completely on purpose, and still, there’s so much fun in the whole thing, which has been challenging and delightful to learn to balance, especially when you realize that each side, the specificity and the freedom, benefits the other,” said Madeline Burk ‘23. Burk was featured in a previous issue as she discussed her creative process and the exciting opportunity to bring Polly Peachum to



Joe Grisanzio ‘23 plays Macheath and Madeline Burk ‘23 plays Polly in the Muhlenberg College Theatre & Dance production of “The Threepenny Opera,” Oct. 28 – Nov. 6.

life. From the audience’s reactions, Burk succeeded in bringing her wonderfully nuanced character to the Empie stage, receiving raucous applause and recognition after all of her numbers.

Cailyn Murray ‘23, who plays Matt of the Mint, says, “This entire process has just been me being continually blown away by the people around me. The cast and creative team behind ‘Threepenny’ is not only insanely talented but super passionate about this project, and I think the entire thing is one big labor of love. Working with everybody over the past two months has been such a blast and I really don’t think I could have asked for a better production to end my Muhlenberg career with as I’m graduating in December.”

Other performers expressed similar sentiments of being pushed by their characters and the creative team throughout the process of bringing “The Threepenny Opera” to life. “I really feel like we’ve been encouraged to make big acting choices

and take agency over our work in a way that’s been really helpful to me as a performer. The collaborative environment... in the rehearsal space allows us to share ideas, talk about characters and figure out what’s going to work best for this specific production. This show has certainly expanded my idea of what kinds of shows I can be in... I feel very lucky to be a part of this process.” said Allison Mintz ‘23, who brings Mrs. Peachum to life.

Danny Milkis ‘23, who plays Tiger Brown, says, “Having the opportunity to be part of such a consequential theatre piece with this incredible group of people has been a unique privilege. The fact that our production allows us to tell the story of this crucial moment in our local and national history, especially through the lens of a nearly one-hundred-year-old work, goes to show how well Brecht captured the cyclicity of social politics.”

“The Threepenny Opera” will run for one more weekend in the Empie Theatre on Nov. 3, Nov. 4, Nov. 5 and Nov. 6.

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Bonhomme ‘24, Julianne Lucas ‘24 and Eva Schwartz ‘26 with Eli Lynch ‘25 as an understudy. The play portrayed a conversation between a white character and a Black character that is representative of how Black voices are commonly overshadowed by white voices, especially regarding issues within the Black community. Following “The Talk” was “Llorona,” a staged reading of a student-written show by Ale Cepeda Bádiz ‘23 and co-directed by Ruhani Singh ‘23 and starring Alina Hernandez ‘25, Adrián Padrón-Curet ‘26, Julian Torres ‘25, Des Suarez ‘23, Kyle Barkis ‘25, Raja Darain Khan ‘25 and Kristin Dlugos ‘26. The show told the story of a woman, Llorona, who was detained by border control and lost her children because of it while an intern tries to reconnect her with her children. Both shows were great performances that portrayed very prominent and pressing issues in our world today.

Oyinkansola Adebajo ‘24 performed a self-written spoken word/rap, then shared, “This festival is important to me as a marginalized creator, since there are not many spaces that specifically focus



The cast of “Llorona” performing at MVTAF.

on identity in a low competition environment. I think my performance went really well. In the future, I think MVTAF can really be a launching space for projects by marginalized people.”

Along with this, Jules Curtis ‘25 sang “Breathe” from “In The Heights” to bring some more Latinx representation

to MVTAF. They remarked about how they’re “ecstatic and proud of [Qian] for putting it together! It’s a start for more opportunities for marginalized voices in the theatre world. I thought it went well! I’m very thankful that I had the opportunity to perform.”

Another performance from Danica

Gullick ‘26 and Jordan Logue ‘26 with Logue performing a dance to Gullick’s poem. Logue said her “performance was about the LGBTQ+/WLW experience, and I am so glad we had the space to perform it! Our performance went really well! Everyone running the festival was super helpful and kind, and the audience was attentive and supportive!”

“[Qian] did lots of outreach to groups on campus, and were able to include some a capella and representation from affinity groups on campus. I think future festivals can hopefully build from this and include more mediums and themes of performance.” continued McCabe, mentioning the performances by a cappella groups Chaimonics, CODA, and InAcchord and how MVTAF can and will evolve in the future with more groups getting involved. Qian concluded with their hopes for the future of MVTAF as well, “My hope is that MVTAF can bring awareness to affinity groups on campus, as well as provide a safe space for artists of marginalized identities.”



## Living Writers

## Poet Jericho Brown performs his work



PHOTO COURTESY OF TOM AMICO / MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

Poet Jericho Brown meets with Muhlenberg students to discuss his writing processes and answer students' questions.

BY KEANNA PEÑA  
CO-A&C EDITOR

On Oct. 24, award-winning poet Jericho Brown joined the Muhlenberg community for a Q&A and live reading as part of the Living Writers series. He is the third author to be featured. In preparation for Brown's visit, students read "The Tradition" (2019), a finalist for the 2019 National Book Award and the winner of the 2020 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry. This collection of poems aims to break the tradition of silence on topics such as the continued racism in America, the abuse he suffered at home and prejudice based on sexuality.

At the Q&A, students asked Brown a variety of different questions regarding specific poems in the collection, his writing practice and poetry as a whole. One student asked Brown about how he created his metaphors, and went on to explain, "I wasn't very good at metaphors at first. It's actually something I had practiced over time and thank God for basketball. I remember in LeBron James' early career, while he would play, commentators would say, 'Oh, he's got to work on this,' or 'he doesn't have that, but he does have this.' And it gave me the sense that I can get better. Like, there are certain things I'm not so great at doing. But if I practice them enough, I can get better at doing them. And then literally that next season watching LeBron James play, you would hear commentators say, 'oh, he has this now that he didn't have that last season, but you still need to do this next season, etc.'"

Brown continued to explain to students in a very accessible way how he would write his poems, making jokes with the audience and laughing on stage. At one point he said, "It's really just me in my underwear, pacing around my living room, looking crazy, chanting to myself."

Later, at the live reading, Brown read over ten poems to the audience, and even

read a few new and unpublished works. He read poems from "The Tradition" and from his two previous collections, "New Testament" and "Please." Brown's reading of his poems reiterated for students that poetry is truly an oral art. Sarah Wedeking '24 said, "I loved Brown's performances of his poems. You could see the passion and the power instilled in his words, simply by watching him speak them. I remember getting goosebumps at one point."

Alex Caban-Echevarria '23 added, "My favorite part about Brown's live reading was the energy that he brought to every poem. He spoke so eloquently and beautifully whether while reading or from memorization."

At one point, a student asked Brown about the difference between poetry and prose. Brown explained, to the amusement of the audience, that a prose writer can't read the last page of their book without having to explain the plot of the novel, while he can read the last page of any of his poetry collections. "What I mean is, when you remember a poem, you don't just remember what happens in the poem, you remember the language of the poem, while you're at the opera house, the grocery store. You can't hold the novel, the language of the novel, the same way you can with poetry."

Many students enjoyed Brown's talk. Harry Glicklin '26 commented, "I was never big into poetry, but [Brown] made it feel much more accessible. Brown talked about how he drew inspiration from his favorite music and TV shows, which is something that I feel that I could do too. He also put into perspective the amount of work it takes to write a poem. I had always thought of it to be a quicker task, as poems aren't often lengthy, but Brown said that it typically takes him years to complete a poem, which was fascinating."

Wedeking also learned a lot from Brown's visit. "Brown once said that poetry is like a machine. You don't know

what their function is yet, but they aim to do something. After learning that, I realized that a lot of the poetry I write ends up giving me clarity on my thoughts and emotions. It's the fact that writing, or even poetry is not just an expression of one's thoughts, but a process of processing those thoughts and emotions so [that] they can be expressed clearly."

Professor of English Alec Marsh, Ph.D., attended the live reading and expressed, "I liked Mr. Brown personally, a lot—a really charming, entertaining, delightful person. I thought his reading really brought his poems to life. I was interested in his use of dialect and different voices in the poems, which is not evident on the page." Brown read a poem called "Nim" that was composed of different phrases he's heard people say all of his life. As he read the poem, he modulated his voice to mimic that of the people who would say these phrases. Marsh added that Brown's performance of this poem "was full of different voices and really came alive for me."

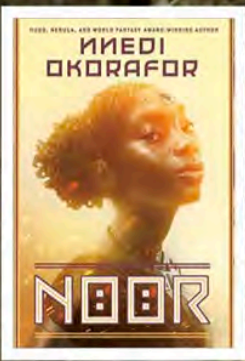


And as for the Living Writers class as a

whole, Wedeking reflected, "My favorite part of the Living Writers [course] so far are the authors who come and talk about their work. You really do see the work through a different lens, as a reader, a writer and a person. And it's eye-opening to see the process, something not really talked about in literary classes. There's just the finished work, not the actual way meanings and ideas are made into the work." However, students have expressed dismay towards the structure of the class. There is a lecture on Monday with the entire Living Writers cohort (60+ students) and then it is divided into sections for the rest of the week. Wedeking added, "I'm not a huge fan of how the class is structured. It doesn't feel like an English class to me, where we can discuss the text freely. Instead, it feels like a lecture. I also do not like the emphasis on asking questions. Can't I just listen to the author gush about their work?"

The next author to be featured in the Living Writers Series is Nnedi Okorafor, where she will be discussing africanfuturism in her novel, "Noor," on Nov. 7.

**FALL 2022**

**The Living Writers Reading Series**

**Nnedi Okorafor**

*A Conversation, Book Sales & Signing*

**November 7, 2022 | 7 p.m.**

**Moyer Miller Forum**


*Books will be available for cash or credit sales*

**ABOUT NNEDI OKORAFOR**

**Nnedi Okorafor** is an international award-winning New York Times Bestselling novelist of science fiction and fantasy for children, young adults and adults. Born in the United States to Nigerian immigrant parents, Nnedi is known for drawing from African cultures to create captivating stories with unforgettable characters and evocative settings. Nnedi has received the World Fantasy, Nebula, Eisner and Lodestar Awards and multiple Hugo Awards, among other accolades, for her books. Champions of her work include Neil Gaiman, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, George RR Martin and Rick Riordan. Literary ancestors Diana Wynne Jones, Ursula K. Le Guin and Nawal El Saadawi also loved her work. Nnedi holds a Ph.D. in literature, two master's degrees (journalism and literature) and lives in Phoenix, Arizona, with her daughter Anyaugo. Learn more at [nnedi.com](http://nnedi.com). You can also follow her on Twitter (@nnedi) and Instagram (@nnediokorafor).

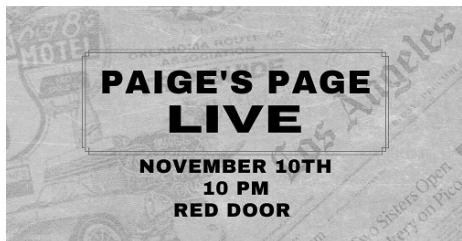
**This series is free and open to the public.**

*Sponsored by English Literatures and Writing and the Center of Ethics*



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## Paige's Page

BY PAIGE WEISBURG  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Hey besties! Welcome back to this week's edition of Paige's Page! I hope you all had a fantastic Halloweekend! No one understood my pop-culture-reference costumes so I'm never going to be creative ever again. I'm kidding...just feeling weirdly old for only 21. Anyways, it seems as though you are all trying to recover from this spooky week and work on improving yourselves as we move on to the lovely month of November. New month, new me... or something like that. Let's get into these questions!

**Q** Hi Paige, I'm thinking about switching my major, but I'm so scared to do that. Help!

Hey bestie! This is actually such a fun problem to have but I'm sorry that it is causing you so much stress! Little known fact about me, Paige Weisburg, is that I changed my major not once but twice, and my minor three times. It was incredibly stressful, so I totally get what you are feeling. This just means that you are learning more about yourself, which is always a good thing! I came into Muhlenberg as a psychology major and I took my first ever psychology class freshman year and I hated it so much. I learned that the only reason I wanted to study psychology was because I wanted to know what was going wrong in my brain, but I actually don't care about it that much in a larger and more practical way. That, however, led me to a few more things which brought me to my beloved—political science. I feel really fulfilled studying this and I am so happy that I decided that it was okay to give up on what I thought I wanted. That was scary for sure but if I can do it and end up here, so can you! Switch your major as many times as you want until you land on that perfect thing for you! It will happen, I promise!

**Q** Hey Paige, how do you get over someone?

Hi bestie, fabulous question! Short answer, therapy. For a long time. Long answer, it takes a while, be gracious with yourself. If you feel gross, allow yourself to feel gross, but ultimately you are still here and you will be fine. You are not, and will never be, defined by how much someone likes you or if you have a partner or not. The feeling of rejection is really difficult to deal with in general, but in my experience, you have to learn to like yourself again. The experience of rejection from a single person (who is really probably not worth it if we are being honest with ourselves) can spiral really quickly into a stream of consciousness that is full of self-hatred and disgust and can make you feel worthless. If I was writing this like three years ago, I would have said to keep that to yourself to avoid looking weak, but the Paige that is writing this in 2022 is telling you to express your emotions. You don't have to tell them how you feel directly, but don't fear looking "weak." It's not weakness; understanding, feeling, and processing your emotions is one of the greatest forms of strength you can show. Having good people around you to support you is really important to the process of moving on. Lean on those people. Remembering that you are capable of being loved is really hard to do when you

are in the early stages of moving on. Also, I know a lot of people that give advice on this would say to just pick someone else, I personally don't think that is good advice at all. Enjoy being single, have fun, and spend time with your friends. There is no rush to find a new love interest. But also go to therapy—for a long time.

**Q** Hi Paige! Can I give advice about something even if I don't have real experience in it?

Hey bestie! You absolutely can! I do it every week!

Paige's Page Live is officially happening! Nov. 10 at 10 p.m. in the Red Door! Can't wait to see you all there!

You can submit questions to <https://tinyurl.com/paigespagequestion>. It will also be linked in my Instagram bio— @paigeweisburg and in The Muhlenberg Weekly Instagram Linktree.

# 2 revisited

BY BRIANNA KOVIT  
COPY EDITOR

The 2014 pop culture landscape was unmatched by anything going on today. "Glee" was on the air every week. One Direction was deep into their third world tour. Taylor Swift had just blossomed as an off-the-charts pop star with her "1989." Teens today would relish the opportunity to be a teenager in 2014. To experience all these cultural staples as they happened, oh my. I get it. I was a fresh-faced 13-year-old stan Twitter connoisseur of the time.

I was a teenager in 2014. A sepia-filtered, skater-skirt-wearing and Justin Bieber-obsessed teenager in all my adolescent glory. My 2014 was defined by many of the pop culture phenomena described in this unabashedly envious tweet from a current teen:

"Can u imagine [being a teen in 2014]? Like Taylor Swift is at her peak. 1D is together. Early moments of 5SOS. Glee is still on. I cannot," (@swiftsbassetts). (Just to be clear: I do not, and never did, care about 5 Seconds of Summer in the slightest. They will not be referenced again. Sorry).

I remember shrieking during One Direction's "Where We Are Tour" (I was a Louis girl). I remember basking in Taylor Swift's outsized Tumblr presence (because what other superstar leans into a meme-based conversation about their doppelganger Becky dying of a cannabis overdose—ikykyk.) I remember sobbing during the Glee series finale as Rachel Berry bid farewell to William McKinley

High School (singing Darren Criss' only original song for the show, "This Time.") I remember it all—and it didn't always look like that tweet.

More than the pop culture moments of the time, younger Gen Z's 2014 obsession is rooted in aesthetics. The foundational 2014 fashion aesthetic could be described as "soft grunge." It featured the grunge appeal of fish-net stockings and choker necklaces but was complemented by bleached hair and frilly skirts. One search through 2014 Tumblr would drop you into an abyss of girls of the-like.

While Tumblr was an outlet for outfit inspiration and innocent observation, it was also the breeding ground for an invasive and haunting online culture. Tumblr in 2014 was almost akin to an eating disorder. Sure, the quintessential Tumblr Girl wore Doc Martens and had a side-

part in her hair, but what made her desirable was not her fashion. It was the unnaturally wide thigh gap showcased by her skater-skirt; and bulging collarbones highlighted by her one-size-fits-all Brandy Melville size zero crop top. Tumblr captured the real grunge aesthetic of the time.

I can't find the point in younger Gen Z's 2014 obsession. Maybe there is an escapism from their own incomprehensibly-heightened, adolescent social media frenzy. Maybe there is a curiosity about the early days of social media. Maybe they all really do just wish One Direction was still together. But those boys grew up, and maybe these kids just have to as well.



PHOTO COURTESY OF FLICKR USER LEANNE SURFLEET

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor ([bergweeklyoped@gmail.com](mailto:bergweeklyoped@gmail.com)) or the Editor-in-Chief ([weeklyeditor@gmail.com](mailto:weeklyeditor@gmail.com)) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.





# The Black Dahlia lies

BY HOPE BIDDLE  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

if you look hard enough  
deep sultry red like the  
finest American wine  
seeps out from the sides  
of my mesmerizing middle  
like a heart exploding  
my plush pointed petals  
preach  
Remember me

made from the dripping  
sweat and bred to be beautifully black  
my roots spread like a foreign cobweb,  
as i sit forcefully planted on the side of the highway  
staring at the bisected stem-like torso  
now forgotten and mutilated  
and we are both unnaturally created by man

my DNA is crafted by  
the urge to resurrect the  
Arabian Night and manufacture  
a darker hue  
her beauty is sliced by a serial killer's wish  
to dominate her name  
through her,  
my graphic gratuitousness  
grates on

PHOTO COURTESY OF FLICKR USER GREYLOCH



# A love letter to Halloween on college campuses

BY ROWAN HAUK  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It's a waning crescent day  
In a brisk month of 2022  
And two old ladies step out of a car  
One of those rectangles of a car  
And the tallest one's silver hair stays so still  
She is in charge, the hair is not the only tell  
She holds the other  
Hand  
Wrist  
Waist  
And a pair of dollar store cat ears  
Fluffy blak tail rolled up and tucked into her back pocket  
*Face me*  
Ginger tufts of curls only coming up to her nose  
And she fixes the ornamental ears on top  
Spins her gentle  
Like they've been getting ready together forever  
And they have  
Forever  
Back of dress zippers  
*What about these shoes*  
*You can't pull off those pants, I love you, I do*  
*But*  
*But the pants just aren't you*  
*I want them to be*  
*I know*  
A tail clipped to the back of the women's jeans  
It takes a long time with shaky hands  
As the cold of the street stays  
When they want to leave  
They walk together  
Put together  
With mismatched sneakers stepping simultaneously  
Too many stories featuring each other  
A look shared  
And I don't know what it means  
Too much  
In one moment  
Years  
Years  
Many cars and costumes  
I hold my youth  
Weight in the forging lines on my palm  
Other side only a vague inclination  
Give me more  
Ask me what they share in a look  
Ask me again  
Again  
Again Again

PHOTO COURTESY OF FLICKR USER PEDRO FERREIRA





# Wrestling team prepares to hit the mat

BY RYLAN DeSTEFANO  
STAFF WRITER

In recent weeks, the wrestling team has been strategizing to prepare for a successful season. The team has been training in order to progress as a whole, and to build up excitement for the start of the season. The drive, motivation and passion within the team as a whole is represented throughout preseason and will hopefully pour into the season.

Fletcher Goodman '25, having already tasted victory with a first place finish at the 2021 Alvernia Invitational, has his goals set on a Centennial Conference championship and seems to be striving for a trip to the NCAA Championships in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Goodman said, "[The] wrestling season is a long grind, and we want to be doing our best wrestling at the end of the season when it counts the most. For a young team, we gained a lot of experience last season and we're continuing to build on that. I think this year our mental preparation and just the feeling of being here before is having a big impact on the guys, you can see it in practice and the way everyone is mentally approaching this season. There's high energy and excitement among the guys and I think that is going to be displayed this weekend and set a precedent for the whole season going forwards."

Continuing, Goodman gave his insight into preseason training, as well as the team's overall preparation for the upcoming

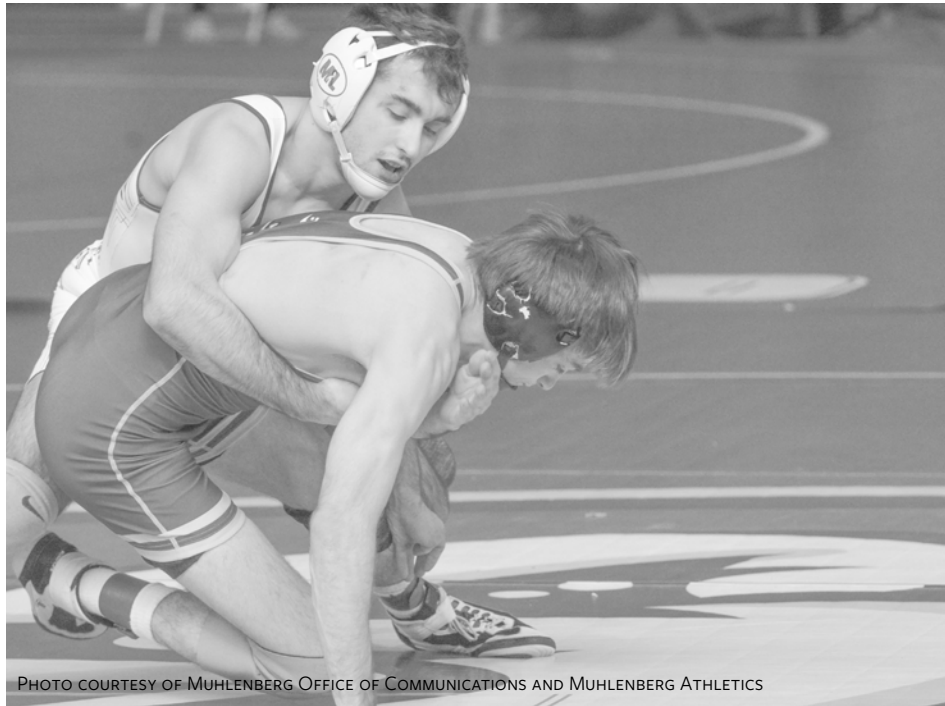


PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS

The wrestling team at the NCAA championship last year. We hope they make it back this year!

ing season saying, "We've been focusing on sharpening the little details in our drilling. We had a great preseason lifting and agility program and a lot of the guys developed really well. These past few weeks we've been focusing on getting back into 'wrestling shape' and getting into good habits with our technique, making sure we establish good habits as we head into our first week of competition."

Goodman discusses the team's excitement for competing in the new season, as well as the devotion that the team radi-

ates—which will hopefully be seen within the new season. "Last season we had a lot of young talent and saw a lot of potential for what we can have this season. It's been a long off-season of training and the boys are eager to get back on the mat and showcase the hard work that was put in during the off-season."

It is evident that the team's effort to do better is prominent, as Goodman describes, "We have a lot of grit on our team and a lot of guys with great work ethic. Staying healthy and continuing to train

smart throughout the season will be crucial for us." Alongside the entire team, head coach Jason McLean has been working to push his team to be the best they can. "Coach has been pushing us hard and making sure we're getting the maximum effort out of our workouts. Last season we may have overtrained, and injuries may have held us back. This season our workouts are a little shorter with higher intensity which has been very beneficial, and the guys are feeling good heading into this weekend's tournament at Alvernia," says Goodman. The team hopes to take their season slow and stay healthy, as many strong teammates last year became sick.

For the Mules, the overall goal of a Centennial Conference championship isn't a pipe dream. Recently the National Wrestling Coaches Association Preseason Division III rankings were released, and the Muhlenberg wrestlers swarmed the rankings. Joey Lamparelli '24 ranked eighth in Division III and second in the Mideast Region at the 125-weight class, Brandon Bowles '25 ranked tenth in Division III and second in the Mideast Region at the 149-weight class, Frank DiEso '25 ranked second in the Mideast Region at the 133-weight class, and Anson Dewar '25 ranked fifth in the Mideast Region at the 174-weight class.

The wrestling team will begin their season on Saturday, Nov. 5, at Alvernia Invitational.

## Basketball program adjusts to new ball

BY MATTHEW KEMPTER  
ROOKIE WRITER

The Muhlenberg men's basketball team began their practices on Saturday, Oct. 15, the team will not only be adjusting to new personnel but they'll also have to get used to using a different basketball. Although changing the ball does not seem like a big deal, it is something the team will definitely need time to adjust to.

Last year, the NBA made a similar move, switching all of their game balls from Spalding to Wilson. The players were not a fan of this switch and many of them voiced their issues with the new basketball, the Wilson Evolution. The NCAA is now also adopting the Wilson Evolution ball, which could result in many of the same issues seen in professional basketball.

Although a few players did not think too much into the change of balls, Bobby Lewit '23 voiced his concerns on how the ball will affect his game. "If we switch to the Wilson Evolution the ball will become

slippery five minutes into the game. Because of that, there's going to be more turnovers and missed shots." This is the same issue affecting many NBA players. Clippers star Paul George has mentioned how the ball has a different touch and softness than the Spalding basketball.

At Muhlenberg, players were comfortable with the previous Wilson basketball and never complained about the grip, touch, or moisture on the ball as the game went on. But now players like Lewit are starting to notice the difference, saying it feels bigger than before.

"Feeling comfortable with the new ball is going to take time and reps. I don't believe it's something we should use as an excuse, but it's definitely going to take time," said Tommy McGuire '23.

For now, the team will have no choice but to use the Wilson Evolution unless the NCAA decides to reverse its decision or switch to a different ball entirely.

LEHIGH VALLEY

# FOOD BLOGGER

## Q&A EVENT



**The Official Brunch Boys - Sumfoodie**  
**Lehigh Valley EatZ - Lehigh Valley Food for Thought**  
**Trigger Happy LLC - Lehigh Valley Eats**

<b>SATURDAY NOVEMBER 5</b> <b>4PM-6PM</b>	<b>AT JAY'S LOCAL</b> 2301 W LIBERTY ST. ALLENTOWN
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**MC: Sara Viteri of The Peak TV**  
**Food By: Jay's Local (Secret Menu)**  
 A chat with some of the Lehigh Valley's premier food bloggers, podcasters, influencers & photographers.



# Men's soccer ticketed to playoffs

BY NOAH BERGER  
STAFF WRITER

The Muhlenberg men's soccer team has had a strong season. The Mules have compiled (6-5-1), landing them the sixth seed in the Centennial Conference playoffs. During the beginning of the season, Varsity Field, the home of the Mules, was not ready for competition. This forced the Mules to play their games at an alternative site. "The biggest challenge for us was the inability to play on our home field for the first few games of the season," said centerback Evan Schlotterbeck '25. "The field was being repaired and we had to move all of our home games off-site which was not ideal. We play our best soccer on Varsity Field and losing that to start the season was tough for us."

However, the Mules have collected an impressive stat sheet of wins and ties this season, such as Chris Richards '23 scoring his first-career hat trick (three goals in one game) and being named centennial conference player of the week. Throughout the season, the Mules have forced three shoutouts with two of them coming against Swarthmore College and the battle for the valley against local rival Moravian University. One of the Mules' standout wins throughout the season was when they traveled to Dickinson College and won (5-1) which showed they can compete both at home and on the road.

Evan Schlotterbeck '25 talked about some of the difficulties when it came to not being able to play at Varsity Field for the beginning of the season.

"It also took us a little while to figure out what style of play and tactics suited us best," said Schlotterbeck. "We played around with different formations and game plans, but it was not until about halfway through the year that we found our groove, and since then we have looked much more confident and comfortable on the field."

Despite the challenges presented at the beginning of the season, that did not stop the Mules as they had great momentum heading into the playoffs. "Our biggest strength is our ability to score goals, we have the most goals scored in the entire conference, and we don't plan to slow down. We also have depth on our bench, we can sub 6-7 guys off our bench and the level of play should remain the same and even increase at times," said fellow teammate Chris Richards '23. "We have the players that are capable of great things, we just need to stay confident and do what we know we can, and that is playing a high level of soccer and making our opponents defend. Once we are able to control the possession, then we can attack gaps in the defense and capitalize on opponents' mistakes. We have been extremely successful in counterattack situations and plan to continue this as we move into conference playoffs."

Schlotterbeck understands that the Mules need to have confidence in their abilities in order to perform well in the playoffs. He said, "I think the biggest thing we all need to focus on is continuing to buy into the team-first mentality. We have done a great job playing as



PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS

Teammates Zach Mikuta '24 and Kevin Adams '25 fights for possession of the ball.

a cohesive unit throughout the year, and a big reason for that is every member of the squad will do whatever it takes to help the team win. The more we can continue to fight for the guys next to us, the harder it will be for teams to match our intensity. Another thing we [have] bought in on is believing in each other and ourselves. We have the talent, we have the drive, we have that winning mentality in us, and the more we can prepare each other for our opportunity to make a real run at this championship, the more determined we will be."

With the playoffs coming, the Mules have to continue to have a well-balanced

approach in order to play at their greatest potential. David Goldstein '23 talked about how the Mules need to continue to focus so they can be successful in the playoffs. He said, "Our biggest focus is on controlling what we can control. We know that we have a lot of talent within our squad, and if we stick to our game and give maximum effort then we will be successful. We have had some huge results this season by controlling the controllables and not worrying about things external to us."

The Mules are ready to enter the playoffs with full force.

PHOTOS BY MADDIE CILIENTO '25



## Mayhem step team performs at "Monster Mayhem"





# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## Speeding into regionals

*XC captains set their sights on success and growth.*

BY MATTHEW BAKER-GRUNZA  
SPORTS EDITOR

As the grass thawed in Haverford, PA, the Mules tightened the spikes on the bottom of their shoes. In the past three weeks, the Mules have run 100 miles in preparation for these five quick miles. Oct. 29 will be an important day for the Mules but is just another stop in their NCAA campaign, with regionals in sight.

The training leading up to this day was relentless. Captain of the women's team Adrienne Ellison '23 described a training program that would make most people's legs ache at the thought. "We have run A LOT of hills during training this season. We have done hill training mostly because DeSales [University] (Regionals course) is extremely hilly and difficult; we are training to be comfortable with hills. The Friday before conferences, we ran a tempo run on the DeSales course to be further familiarized with it and run a few seconds off of race pace."

The DeSales course is littered with hills that stand as towers of apathy, remorseless in the pain that they inflict on the runners who dare to challenge them at sub-six or even sub-five minute miles. Both the men's and women's teams traveled on Oct. 21 to challenge themselves and, as Jason Ivey '23 said, "knowing that course like the back of our hand will give us a genuine edge," in the regional meet on Nov. 12.

Besides specific regional training the teams pursued self-improvement in workouts meant to increase the teams endurance at high-intensity intervals. Ellison highlighted that, "At the peak of our training, we did two difficult workouts on the track. The first was 3-mile repeats. This is when we run faster than the race pace for a mile and get faster with each rep. We did one tough speed workout which was two sets of 1200, 800, 600, 400, 200 with fairly short rest (2-1 minute rest) to work in some speed to our training."

After the race the cross-country coach released a summary email to both teams saying, "Both the men and women's cross country teams placed 8th today in the Centennial Conference Championship, one of the most competitive Division III cross country conferences in the nation. Adam Stefan '23 once again led the men as



PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS

Cross country teams are off to the races.

the top runner for Muhlenberg, Markus Vottero ['25], Connor Soderstedt ['23], David Ludwig ['26] and Jason Ivey ['23] rounded out the Muhlenberg top five. Adrienne Ellison led the women followed closely by Caiti Kinnear ['24], Lauren House ['25], Julia Tassone ['26] and Izzy Hoffman ['26]. Muhlenberg ran extremely competitively and is in a great position to place higher at the regional qualifier as a team that even placed today in the conference meet."

These results follow the team's trend of constant growth and reflect the caliber of runners that the Muhlenberg team is facing. Ivey explains that "One thing you have to acknowledge though is that the CC is one of the most competitive conferences in the country based on how many runners they send to nationals each year so take the placement with a grain of salt."

On the men's team three runners PR'd with Ivey leading the charge with a 24 second PR. Hayden Klein '25 beat his best time by an impressive 12 seconds with Ethan Yazdanyar '25 following in stride

beating their personal record by five seconds.

The tenacious athletic temperament is further exemplified in Ellison's outlook post-race saying, "I would also add in cross country the whole season is built up for Regionals. Our season is far from over 'til we hit the course on November 12. We have goals set throughout the season to help us ensure we can meet our goals at Regionals. We expected to place higher at conferences than we did; however, all of the women know how they can adjust to make sure we beat those teams ahead of us,"

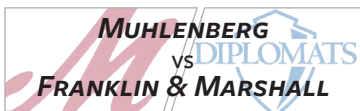
"I have also learned sometimes it is better to lead by example than to be over controlling" said Ellison. Ellison and Ivey's performance in the past meet beacons shining to their young team. As each captain crests the hills of the DeSales course their light will not disappear in the valleys that follow. These seniors and Stefan have brought this team out of COVID into a new era of ambitious and close knit runners. Ellison reminisces about what the team has meant to her saying, "Lead-

ership is something I am always working on. Being captain of the track team last year, I felt prepared to be captain in cross country but with a new group of people brings new challenges. I had to learn how to instill a good team culture and build trust with each other on the team. Additionally, something big I will take with me after graduation is that support and guidance looks different for everyone and I have to adjust to each person. This is why it is important to build a close relationship with my teammates so I can learn about them and how I can support them."

The women's cross-country roster is built by young athletes such as Julia Tassone '26 who has shown incredible growth. Ellison is most proud of her internalization of a lesson important to many athletes and college students. "We are all very proud of Julia's performance and she has been training very hard during practice and the results are showing now. One of the toughest lessons to learn in running is to trust the process because you do not see immediate results."

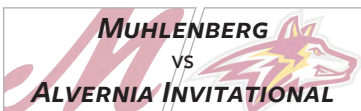
Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Nov. 3 - Nov. 9

### Men's Soccer



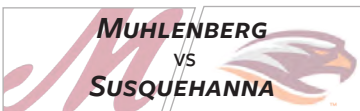
Fri, Nov. 4 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Lancaster, Pa.

### Wrestling



Sat, Nov. 5 @ 9:00 a.m.  
Reading, Pa.

### Football



Sat, Nov. 5 @ 1:05 p.m.  
Scotty Wood Stadium

### Men's Basketball



Tues, Nov. 8 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Bethlehem, Pa.





**Josh Shapiro (D)**  
elected governor of  
Pennsylvania.

**Mike Schlossberg '05 (D)**  
reelected state representative.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2022  
VOLUME CXLIV, ISSUE VIII

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## NEWS

Students are excited for  
first ever Mule-a-thon.

**read more on page 4**



## ARTS & CULTURE

Student performance  
groups join in Diwali cel-  
ebration.

**read more on page 6**



## OP/ED

Johnny Veglia '24 questions  
the realness of BeReal.

**read more on page 8**



## SPORTS

What makes a mule?  
A guide to getting the  
best care as an athlete.

**read more on page 11**



PHOTO BY AYDEN LEVINE '23/PHOTO EDITOR



# Jill Biden Ed.D. speaks at 'Berg

*read on page 2*

# New Race & Power GAR implemented

BY SARAH WEDEKING  
LAYOUT EDITOR

In the last few weeks, Muhlenberg approved a new general academic requirement (GAR): Race and Power in the American Experience (RP). It will be added to the 18 other academic requirements, though the College is currently in the process of reevaluating the entire curriculum.

English and Africana Studies Assistant Professor Emanuela Kucik, Ph.D., said, "The central goal of the RP is to ensure that all Muhlenberg students take courses that address racism and that provide students with tools to dismantle current systems of power, racism and inequity and build just, fully equitable systems in their place."

The Race and Power in the American Experience GAR originated from the Black Faculty and Action letter in the fall of '20. Shortly after the letter was released, the Academic Policy committee reached out to begin conversations about developing the GAR.

"It's time for us as an institution to make sure that every student is leaving Muhlenberg with the ability to knowledgeably discuss these issues," Academic Provost Laura Furge, Ph.D., said, "To understand differences in perspectives, and experiences and how that shapes each unique American experience."

There are over a dozen different learning goals attributed to the GAR, and 'Berg wants to make sure that this requirement is not specific to one department. "They'll be [classes] offered across the curriculum," Furge said. "Students will be able to choose, hopefully, what kind of experience in the race

it will take at least a few years before the RP will be fully developed and implemented.

None of the current class years enrolled will be affected by this change.

But the proposed choice: to add RP as an additional GAR, or to replace one of the Human Difference and Global Engagement

but we wanted to kind of fine tune it."

The faculty chose to provisionally add the RP GAR as an additional GAR, which Mello was "personally apprehensive" about. This addition would mark over 19 GARs for students to fulfill.

"I think our curriculum needs to make sense," Mello said. "I think that right now [fulfilling GARs] is a checklist that incentivizes not intellectual engagement, but a game."

Students often look for classes that will fulfill the most requirements rather than classes they want to take. "We produce a game for students: How can I maximize the number of GARs with the fewest number of courses?" Mello said.

The new GAR has led to these conversations about the College's curriculum, specifically the effectiveness of GARs in a liberal arts college setting.

There were also concerns that there might not be enough resources to teach the GAR. As student enrollment decreases, so does the number of faculty.

"Do we have enough staff that can successfully teach RP-designated classes?" said Olivia Tebsherany '23, a member of the Academic Policy Committee. "Do they have the institutional support necessary to do so?"

**SEE GAR PAGE 4**

PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS



At the most recent Living Writers event, Emanuela Kucik, Ph.D., interviewed Nnedi Okorafor on her experiences writing about race and disability in her novels "Noor" & "Binti."

and power [GAR] that they're most interested in."

Furge offered an example of a biochemistry class in which the RP could be fulfilled. "You can also imagine a science class that would be dealing with genetics and race... and how that has been politicized."

However, what will determine the RP requirement is still being determined. According to Furge,

(DE) GARS, led to some difficult conversations within the faculty.

Department Chair and Professor of Political Science Brian Mello, Ph.D., is part of the Academic Policy Committee, and was a proponent for the latter, replacing one of the DE requirements. Mello said, "We didn't want to lose the global engagement—focus on the human difference and global engagement,



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

10/30/2022

Leh Street: Report of noise complaint, upon arrival residents spoken to, area cleared, no further incident.

Benfer Hall: Report to check the welfare, residents spoken to, no further incident.

Seegers Union: Report of found wallet, owner later claimed item.

Ettinger Hall: Pointe of information report, individuals spoken to, no further incident.

Robertson Hall: Report of fire alarm from cooking, system silenced and reset.

Prosser Hall: Report of found phone, unknown to whom item belongs, phone placed in lost and found locker.

Prosser Hall: Report of found bag, owner notified to pick up at Campus Safety office.

N. 26th Street: Report to jump start vehicle, Campus Safety Officer successfully started vehicle.

Baker Center for the Arts: Report of found camera, owner later claimed item.

Martin Luther Lot: Report of hit and run to vehicle causing damage to bumper and quarter panel, no suspects at this time.

10/31/2022

Prosser Hall: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student taken to hospital by Campus Safety Officer.

Life Sports Center: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg

College EMS responded, student taken to hospital by Campus Safety Officer.

11/01/2022

Liberty Street: Report of damage to lock, Plant Operations aware and will change out lock.

Seegers Union: Report of found set of keys, items placed in lost and found locker.

11/03/2022

M.I.L.E. House: Report of open door, area checked and door secured.

11/04/2022

Off Campus Location: Report of suspicious person, area checked nothing could be noted.

Walz Hall: Report of alcohol violation, resident spoken to, alcohol disposed of by Campus Safety Officer.

11/05/2022

Chew & 23rd Streets: Report to locate individual, contact made, no further incident.

Prosser Hall: Report of violation of no-contact order, investigation to continue.

Scotty Wood Stadium-Marino Field: Report of disturbance, Allentown Police also responded, no further incident.

Life Sports Center: Report of theft of money, investigation to continue.

## Bring Home a Slice of Muhlenberg this Thanksgiving!

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# FLOTUS speaks at Susan Wild event

BY AYDEN LEVINE  
PHOTO EDITOR

“This is the most important election in your life,” said Congresswoman Susan Wild (PA-07).

This was the sentiment echoed throughout the walls of Miller Forum the night of Wednesday, Nov. 2, 2022. Muhlenberg College hosted First Lady Jill Biden EdD, along with Wild and Congresswoman Madeleine Dean (PA-04). The student body was informed about the event less than two days prior by the Office of Communications. Tickets were required to enter the event, but only a small amount were allotted to students by the Muhlenberg College Democrats, the student group that sponsored the event.

Dean was the first to speak, sharing how inclusion in politics has changed in the few short years since she began her congressional career. “Susan and I met back in 2018 when we both first ran for Congress. There were no women in the federal delegation. Imagine that, not a single woman,” said Dean, whose words now juxtapose the powerful image of three women on a stage in front of a room

full of supporters.

Wild took the stage second and spoke of her views on healthcare and the importance of upholding government programs like Medicaid. “Starting in January, insulin will be capped at \$35 a month... and starting next year the total annual out of pocket cost for prescription drugs for senior citizens will be \$2,000,” said Wild.

In perhaps the most anticipated speech, Biden capped off the night with a speech on the importance of voting. She referred to voting as an item on a to-do list with one clear sentiment: “Will you be able to get to the polls? Or will voting be the thing that just doesn’t get crossed off of your to-do list? What Pennsylvanians do on November 8 won’t just set the course for the future of your state. You’ll decide the future of our country as well.”

When speaking with students, the reception of the event was extremely polarized.

Isabelle Peters ‘24 said, “I honestly was really blown away. I was very overwhelmed and just in awe. The energy in the room was cool, but when they actually came out, it was like, whoa, they’re real. They’re real people. It was awesome.”

FROM JILL PAGE 1



Susan Wild spoke on the importance of voting and what she plans to do if she is reelected.

Emily Orlich ‘24 was also enthralled by the event. She said, “I thought it was very fun, informative and empowering.”

Matan Kogen ‘23 had a different experience. He countered, “I feel like it was a bit overblown. I was also really frustrated that they kept us all standing there for an hour and a half before they came out.”

Isaac Shulman ‘25 noted, “Although it was a cool event to attend, I felt like it was lacking in substance. Between the stress of figuring out if it was possible to attend the rally and waiting over an hour for it to start, I was disappointed in the brief speeches all three guests made.” Shulman was one of many students who waited online with the general public to attend the event.

While impressions regarding the ex-

ecution of the event were mixed, students seemed united in their appreciation that the event itself was able to occur on campus grounds.

Aviv Campbell ‘23 expressed how she was pleasantly surprised by the Wild campaign choosing to have their event on Muhlenberg’s campus. “It was really cool. It was so unexpected. I was like, ‘why would they choose Muhlenberg?’ We’re such a small school. Of all the places, I was surprised that it was here. If I was a[n underclassman], I would hope to see more events like that.”

Noah Berger ‘24 felt very proud that Muhlenberg was used as the venue for the rally. “I think it showed that even in

SEE JILL PAGE 4

## Free menstrual product trial in Seegers Union

BY JAKE HOFFMAN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

At the beginning of the spring 2022 semester, a Student Government Association (SGA) ad-hoc committee was formed to pursue implementing free menstrual product dispensers in Seegers Union as a trial to determine if free menstrual products could be further distributed in other buildings on campus. Although the ad-hoc was not formed until the spring, former Student Body President Zaire Carter ‘22 had the idea long before the work officially began. With Margery Leit ‘24 as the chair of the committee, \$9,440 of funding was initially allotted to be spent on purchasing the dispensers and menstrual products from AuntFlow—a small, woman-owned business with 100 percent organic products and a mission of providing freely accessible menstrual product dispensers to ensure that no one should have to be denied menstrual products due to financial hardship.

After deciding to work with AuntFlow, the committee used the initial allotted funding to purchase the dispensers and a supply of hygiene products (around 800 menstrual products were initially purchased to stock the machines for the fall semester), and, now, several months later, SGA plans to set aside additional funds to continue the work that has been done. “This is a huge priority for SGA,” says Ben Eber ‘23, student body president. “Right now the ad-hoc is looking to form a plan to expand the test pilot into the academic buildings, and we are eager to do so with the hopes it becomes a permanent pro-

gram.”

In regard to the possible expansion into additional restrooms in other buildings, Paige Weisburg ‘23—current chair of the ad-hoc committee—speaks to the purpose of instating a trial before full implementation in campus buildings: “We are trying to see if people are taking more than they need to, or if they’re taking about what they need, so that we can gauge for when we move them to academic buildings or residence halls, and what the numbers would look like there.” As for male-identifying or non-binary students who experience menstruation, menstrual products are made available in the gender-neutral restroom in Seegers Union, with the possibility of smaller-scale boxes of products being placed in other restrooms in the future where non-female-identifying students can use the facilities.

Aside from the dispensers being “a little wonky sometimes,” the committee so far has heard nothing but good things regarding the trial: Weisburg remarks that “it’s definitely something that students have expressed that they want on campus.” When Isabel Molettieri ‘23 unexpectedly found herself in need of a hygiene product, she found comfort in the ease and accessibility of the dispenser in Seegers. “I think that [this trial] takes away the stigma from periods, because a lot of people have them and a lot of people need hygiene products for them.” She continues that “it’s comforting to see because it just reminds me that it’s a resource that’s always there.”

However, not everyone has had a posi-

tive experience with the new dispensers. Esther Klinger ‘25, says “I am grateful that they have them because they are helpful, but they are jammed half the time and the product quality is not that great. However, it is a good step forward.”

One student, who chose to remain anonymous, stated that “it doesn’t work; you cannot get anything out of it. There is a button that you can press to get the products but it doesn’t do anything.”

Tori Brady ‘25 said, “I have never used the machines but the other day I saw a girl trying to get the products out of the dispenser but nothing came out and she looked very frustrated.”

SGA has been made aware of reports that sometimes the dispensers don’t work properly. In that case, plant operations are called to fix issues with the machines. Eber further notes that “if the machines continue to pose a problem, we will contact the manufacturer and company we buy from and request they come and inspect the dispensers and see what the options are moving forward from there. Be assured that SGA is not afraid to take action if the dispensers get out of hand.”

Regardless of issues with the dispensers, the overwhelming consensus is that the actions of the ad-hoc committee and the Student Government Association are an important part in providing equity to the Muhlenberg community. Molettieri adds that “I’m really glad that they saw a need for making [menstrual products] more accessible, and they filled it.”

The ad-hoc committee is open to members of the Muhlenberg community outside of the Student Government Associa-



PHOTO BY LEXI HALL ‘26

Students reflect on the new menstrual products dispensers in the bathrooms.

tion, and Weisburg encourages people to come and voice their opinions and provide feedback on the trial as a whole to improve the future of the program. “SGA wants to hear from students, so if anybody who is getting a chance to see this has any input, I would love to hear it,” said Weisburg.

Additional reporting done by Matthew Klinger ‘25 and Matthew Baresh ‘25.



# A preview of Mule-a-thon launch

BY MATTHEW BARESH  
CO-NEWS EDITOR

On Nov. 19, the Interfraternity Council (IFC) and Panhellenic Council will be sponsoring its first ever Mule-a-thon, a twelve-hour dance marathon to raise money for the Amber Louise Elchert Foundation. This non-profit organization was created in memory of Amber Elchert '13 who battled hypoplastic left heart syndrome since she was born. Before she was 18 months old, she underwent three open-heart surgeries and was only given six months to live by her doctor. She graduated from Muhlenberg with a bachelor's degree in psychology before passing four months later. All proceeds from Mule-a-thon will be donated to the foundation in commemoration of Amber and her mission to help special needs children follow their dreams.

The event will take place in Seegers Union from 8 p.m. - 8 a.m. and consist of twelve hours of dancing to various music genres. Participants can sign up as either an individual or in teams of two or more and donate a minimum of \$25 to their fundraising pages through their website. Mule-a-thon will also have different games and interactive activities between each hour, including corn-hole tournaments and dance lessons.

The event was initially put together by a group of committee chairs, with Tom Hiller '23, the school committee head, being at the forefront of the production. "I serve as the main organizer of the event and make sure that each committee is doing their job. I also stayed in direct contact with the Elchert family to make sure that they are happy with the event."

Alex Caban-Echevarria '23, the operations committee head, planned the activi-



Mule-a-thon committee heads are ready for Nov. 19!

ties for the event alongside nine other students. "For the production of the event, we have planned many fun surprises and games coordinated by Isabella Caban-Echevarria '23 to make a minute-by-minute itinerary," explained Caban-Echevarria. "We also have a sub-committee of dancers, headed by Dani Medvedovski '24, who have choreographed line dances to be taught at every hour. Another group, Tali Feen '24 and Emma Schnall '24 designed t-shirts and a Snapchat geofilter. Natalie Noye '23 and Ashley Pasetliner '23 planned a cornhole tournament and a halfway-mark celebration, and Anna Shigo '24, Hilary Rappaport '24 and Phoebe Unger '24 planned the "Beach Room" (Seegers 111-113) that will be filled with games and decorations."

Lindsey Kessler '23, the campus engagement committee head, found different clubs and individuals to become involved in the event. "I have figured out ways to get faculty and staff involved and

helped organize groups to perform at the event," said Kessler. "I also have a great sub-committee that's been helping."

In terms of funds, Jack Younes '23, the local sponsor committee head, reached out to potential sponsors for the event. "My job is to generate interest among potential sponsors and collect monetary or non-monetary donations from them," said Younes. Sam Brown '23, the finance committee head, works with Younes and tracks the funds being put into the event to ensure that donations are accounted for.

Natalie Shaw, assistant director of Student Organizations, Leadership and Engagement (S.O.L.E), has been overseeing the entire process as an advisor. She is confident in the success of Mule-a-thon and the funds that will be raised for the foundation.

"I hope that the Muhlenberg community sees it as a way for everyone to come together and get involved in a shared

event!" exclaimed Shaw. "I also hope that Amber's legacy is shared on campus. The Amber Louise Elchert Foundation does a lot of incredible work to support critically ill children and their families during difficult times."

The rest of the team is equally optimistic about the event and is anticipating lots of community engagement and dancing, of course.

"I'm hopeful that this could be a really big campus event because what I think we're missing is large student-run campus events," said Brown. "I think we need something fresh and new which is how this idea came about in the first place."

"We have been planning since last spring so it has been so rewarding to see it all come together and it will be awesome to watch everyone experience the surprises we have in store," said Kessler.

Students on campus have also shown excitement for Mule-a-thon and its potential, including Sophie Yellis '25 who said, "I'm really excited for it because it'll be a great way for the Greek life community to come together to have fun dancing and raise money for such a great cause."

Ethan Yazdanyar '25 exclaimed, "My high school had a 'thon' event too in 2019, but after the pandemic hit we couldn't have it my junior and senior year. I'm excited to be able to raise money for a good cause as a school again."

"While the event itself is being sponsored by IFC and Panhel, I want to make clear that Mule-a-thon is completely open to the entire student body," Hiller explained. "My goal in creating this was to bring together the entire community to raise awareness to a fantastic cause that honors Amber, who was such a brave and selfless member of the 'Berg community. I would love if as many organizations and people attend Mule-a-thon."

FROM JILL PAGE 3

a small liberal arts school, under 2,000 people, we can really have active roles in politics and be an active political community. Having a speaker like Jill Biden as the main headliner in this event showcased [Muhlenberg] to our [greater] community [as] an active political campus. I feel like it gave us some great coverage on that front."

Kogen added that the convenience of the location was a factor in his decision to attend the event. "I liked that it was on campus, I think if it had been anywhere else in the Lehigh Valley, I probably wouldn't have bothered to go."

Students like Kogen and Berger expressed disappointment at the use of Miller Forum for the location of the rally rather than a larger venue on campus. Unfortunately, the realities of dealing with powerful political figures and the Secret Service limited the spaces that could have been used for the event. All classes in

Moyer Hall the day of the event were moved to other spaces on campus so the building could be fully cleared for security purposes.

Campbell emphasized that she really enjoyed the small scale of the event. "I liked how intimate it was cause I thought I was gonna be standing really far away from her. But I still could see and it felt like I wasn't just standing in the back of a stadium. It kind of made sense that they didn't want everybody and their mother to come."

Peters reflected on the limited tickets provided to Muhlenberg students. While she and Kogen were able to get tickets through their involvement in Muhlenberg College Democrats, she admitted that she wished there was more of an opportunity for a larger audience at the event.

"I kind of wish that they had opened it up more to the student body just because I know a lot of people would have benefited from the talk and probably liked what Susan had to say. But

I do think that the intimacy was necessary just for security reasons with Jill Biden. But overall I think that I would've preferred it if it was in the Event Space or somewhere bigger," Peters mentioned.

Students were under the impression that this was a closed event, but as Campbell, Berger and Shulman learned, the rally had a general admission line that ran from Moyer to Chew Street and contained up to 200 people.

Berger commented, "I could probably say that 10 or 15 of my friends were waiting in that line as well and they all got in."

The consensus among students who attended the rally noted that while the event didn't change their opinion of Susan Wild, it certainly taught them more about her.

Peters said, "I'm not from Pennsylvania, so I didn't have a super strong opinion of her one way or the other, but hearing about her platform and hearing especially about her interest in healthcare and reforming health-

care, especially for diabetics with insulin was really inspiring and I honestly got a little emotional."

Campbell spoke more on her impressions of Wild noting, "I really didn't know much about her before this event. She was standing outside in line greeting all of us as we came in. That was really nice because I actually got to meet her and then, during the event she was a really strong speaker and like I got to hear about her policies and some of the stuff that she's done in the past."

Whether or not students were able to attend a campaign event during this election season, The Muhlenberg Weekly hopes that all eligible took the opportunity to vote in the midterms.

Like Berger expressed, "As a college student, it's my civic duty to attend these types of events and hear what these political leaders have to say, especially attending college in a swing state like Pennsylvania."

FROM GAR PAGE 1

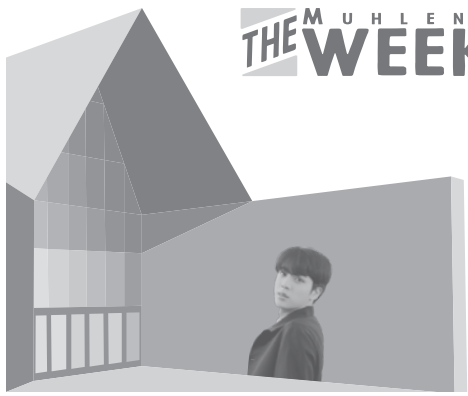
Although much of the staff expressed a readiness to teach these courses, according to Furge, these are questions that still need to be answered.

The current plan is for faculty to be trained to be qualified to teach these courses. Furge said, "We will use the next few years to develop new courses, to provide workshops and training for faculty to prepare them to teach these courses."

Despite this, the 'Berg community is excited to see the Race and Power GAR in action. Kucik said, "I believe that this requirement is a crucial step in Muhlenberg's continued commitment to anti-racism."

AJ Henley '24, another member of the Academic Policy Committee, said, "I think this is something we should be very proud of."





"If we all gather our embarrassment together, it'll become confidence."

- Jin from BTS

## K-Pop Club makes a splash at 'Berg

BY IAN CLARK  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

K-pop is the loveable Korean pop music that can be heard with iconic boy bands such as Bangtan Sonyeondan (commonly known as BTS), BLACKPINK and TWICE. These popular groups have large fan bases and multiple performances with supporters across the globe, allowing for music videos to draw huge numbers online.

"Listening to K-pop was one of the major things that brought me and my best friends at Muhlenberg really close together," stated Sam Tempkin '25, co-president of KPC (K-Pop Club). "I started talking to my roommate and co-president, Emma Schatzberg ['25], in the first place because we both liked K-pop and theater, and we have been bonding over our love for K-pop music, dance and the overall art form ever since."

The new group has allowed for multiple students to share their love of K-pop

on campus and the club has even become a performance ensemble. The group has already started to put on performances at various events across campus, such as Arts Marathon, the annual event held by the Muhlenberg Theatre Association (MTA). Tempkin shared, "It was kind of a last minute decision as it took some of us (including me) a little bit of time to muster up the confidence to commit to performing, but me, Hannah [Watanabe '25], Reece [Ferrentino '25], Grace [Selling '23] and Becca learned 'Love Dive' by IVE in a week and performed it at Arts Marathon."

The group is more than just an opportunity for people to dance as it also allows for connection and fun. It's much more than the traditional dance group. There are opportunities to talk, view and consume everything related to K-pop. "...we have opened up the club to a lot more people and are now offering a variety of ways people can get involved, such as weekly meetings where we watch and talk about K-pop content, as well as dance re-



New KPC dance group is excited to expand their group!

hearsals ran by our chance chairs where anyone can come to learn famous K-pop dances," Tempkin shared.

The choreography is arranged by Selling and Watanabe as the co-dance chairs and they work together to create dances for the group to perform, but they

also allow for cooperation and involvement from everyone. "We regularly ask for opinions from our club mates. We ask for suggestions, recommendations and requests for dances, and then we

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# Diwali: the festival of lights

BY SINHAYANA SRINIVASAN  
STAFF WRITER

Diwali, the Festival of Lights, is one of the most important festivals celebrated by a plethora of religions in the South-Asian community. Top Naach, Muhlenberg's South Asian dance group and affinity space, hosts an annual campus-wide Diwali celebration every year and this year, it was on Friday, Nov. 4.

It was a huge success, with different acapella and dance groups performing, and Indian food for everyone to enjoy. The Event Space was beautifully decorated with traditional Indian pieces of cloth on the walls, lanterns and "diyas," which are Indian clay lamps made of wet mud, oil and cotton. The speakers were blasting fun Bollywood music, and the Event Space was filled with both students and faculty for the celebration.

A lot of effort and hard work was put into this celebration, and it is one of the biggest events the Office of Multicultural Life (OML) throws every year. Especially for the international students of Top Naach, this is a bright festival that they love to celebrate every year. Ruhani Singh '23, the president of Top Naach, spoke nostalgically about what Diwali means to her saying, "Diwali is one of the biggest festivals I celebrate back home in India. Being an international student so away from home, Top Naach's celebration of Diwali—from my very first year at Muhlenberg—is something very close and special to me! It is a way for me to feel a bit of home here and also have the opportunity to share this beautiful festival with my community here. It is a festival where all friends and family come together to share happiness and love, and that is what Top Naach works towards at our celebrations too! For me, personally, this year was bittersweet as it was my last Diwali at 'Berg, yet one of the most memorable ones!"

She then gave a shout out to the various people involved, and highlighted the culmination of departments and groups who put their effort into creating this successful event. "The entire semester, my amazing E-board—Shobha [Pai '24], Noah [Ryall '25] and Catherine [Debah '24]—we all worked with all our team members to make this event a great success. A huge shoutout to all my Top Naachers for their hard work. This event would also have not been possible without the support of our advisor - [Purvi Parikh, Ph.D.], Robin [Riley-Casey], OML, OISS, Sodexo, Berg Productions, our very own DJ, Muntasir Ali ['23], as well as all the performance groups who came to brighten the event!"

Pai, the secretary for Top Naach, also mentioned, "There is a lot of coordination between different departments. We take support from OML and Religious and Spiritual Life. Robin Riley-Casey and Janelle Neubauer have guided us a lot through this whole process. This is also a lot of coordinating between 'Berg Productions. Jonah Adamsik coordinates the lighting and production of the whole event. Then there is housekeeping who we are so grateful to, who set up the whole event."

PHOTO COURTESY OF RUHANI SINGH '23



Top Naach performed at Diwali celebration.

Another unique aspect of the event were the three entertainment tables set up on the sides. There was a rangoli making station, in which one can make beautiful designs using stencils and colored powder on paper. On the other side was a diya painting table, where one could paint clay lamps in a variety of colors and then take them back home. What seemed to excite everyone the most was the professional mehendi artist, Sophie (@hennachakra), who gave people henna tattoos for free.

The entertainment started with two acapella groups, Noteworthy and Chai-monics, who set the cheerful mood within the audience. They were followed by Mint and Poised Ivy, two of Muhlenberg's dance groups who gave spectacular performances. Charis Bakirtzis '26, a member of Top Naach, said, "It was a really unique experience that I really enjoyed. I had never celebrated it, but it was really fun and interesting to get to know about it. I love my Top Naach family and it was an extremely valuable experience."

**"It's amazing to see so many students, faculty, and members of the community come out to learn and celebrate Diwali with us."**

Top Naach then had a small presentation set up, done by its members, which explained the significance of Diwali to South Asians, the mythology behind it and then they gave lovely personal stories of how they celebrated Diwali in their very own family. Amelia Blanco '26, who attended the event, was really impressed with the dances and the presentation, and talked about how "The dances were so mesmerizing! I loved the cultural enrichment it provided me, especially with that

great presentation about Diwali. It was very informative and humorous as well!"

The hosts of the Diwali celebration, Top Naach, had a special performance to end the event on a huge bang. They danced to a fusion of western and Indian music, playing hits from popular Bollywood movies. Debah, the treasurer of Top Naach, was overwhelmed by the huge turnout for Diwali, and said, "It's amazing to see so many students, faculty, and members of the community come out to learn and celebrate Diwali with us. The support [I] felt was overwhelmingly positive and I can't be thankful enough to the Top Naach fam and the Muhlenberg community. Top Naach has created a safe space for those of South Asian descent on campus and are welcoming to those who are interested in learning more about the culture and participating in performances. I really appreciate everyone coming out and I hope to feel the same love and support next semester for Top Naach's Holi celebration and performance!"

Pai said, "Diwali is traditionally celebrated for community and communal bonding. It is less about the actual mythology, but more about being around people you love. We wanted to get that feeling of love in our community. Having a bigger Diwali event and showing South Asian culture is an important part for us, and that's what Top Naach has been doing for a while."

The Diwali celebration is an excellent example of bringing community together, and spreading love and joy to everyone through your culture and traditions. Marilyn Rajesh '26, a member of Top Naach, expressed, "I think it was a beautiful representation of the unity that we as a community share, and one that I'll cherish forever."

FROM **KPOP** PAGE 5

put those suggestions into votes for the whole club. Our goal is to create a club that values all members' opinions," stated Sellinger. "The overall goal of this club is to nurture a truly fun space where K-pop fans can speak openly and passionately about their interests."

"We also both have very busy schedules, so when teaching dances, we each teach different dances to club members or we switch off teaching the same dance when the other one cannot make rehearsal," stated Watanabe in terms of how the work is divided for the co-dance chairs.

The rehearsal process was intense for the first performances with the short time frames and 10-15 hours of practice beforehand, but this should be an area of growth as the club grows and evolves. "We hope to reduce this time-crunch after becoming a more established club (meaning the invitations to perform are presented to us with more time to prepare), but no matter what we work hard to prepare and put on our best show," commented Sellinger. "We love to perform and we hope people love to watch us perform!"

Hannah Cohen '25 mentioned how she found out about KPC from a poster hanging in Seegers Union. This poster was actually hung as the club was beginning to become developed and to gather interest. Schatzberg commented, "The club was only an idea until the second half of last year when Sam, Hannah, one of our co-dance chairs, and I put up an interest poster in Seegers to see if the kpop club was something that was wanted on campus."

"It wasn't even close to an official club yet, not really any advisor or anything. When fall came around and I hadn't heard anything, I wondered if the club had fell through," stated Cohen. "Getting that email saying it was starting up again, but this time it was becoming more official, I was ecstatic."

The club started off as friends just joining together to talk about a shared interest of K-Pop and now it has grown to become an inclusive environment for students all around campus.

Cohen continued, "Having a group where we all love the same thing is not only comforting, but also helps us feel less alone in our music tastes. There's a lot of stigma and assumptions around those who enjoy K-pop and it feels good to have a space where you don't have to worry about being judged."

Anyone is more than welcome to join the club at their general meetings and events including a partnership with Muhlenberg Activities Council (MAC) on Nov. 17 with the fun opportunities to decorate I.D./photocards and to participate in a dance party!

Tempkin concluded, "With all of this, I hope we can provide a safe, fun space for Muhlenberg students to bond over this common interest. I also want to stress that this is very much a club that anyone can be a part of, as there is really something for everyone, whether you are a K-pop super fan, you are interested in learning about new music, or you want to learn really fun dances!"



# “The Vagina Monologues: A Retelling”

BY SAMANTHA TEMPKIN  
STAFF WRITER

“The Vagina Monologues” has returned to Muhlenberg for another year, but this time with a necessary yet motivating call-to-action performed purposefully just two days before Election Day. A cast of 12 students utilized the intimate environment of the Red Door to speak truthfully on the experiences, both oppressing and empowering, of people with vaginas. Director Haley Arnold ‘23 and assistant director Spyro Coffin ‘25 provided the space for cast members to raise their own voices, as 75 percent of the production was made up of self-written work, deviating from the original script written in 1996 to align with personal experiences and the threats facing those with vaginas today. For this reason, this particular production was entitled, “The Vagina Monologues: A Retelling.”

Entry into the event cost a minimum donation of \$2 that would be donated to Valley Youth House and SisterLove. Coffin comments on how the production team came to elect these organizations, saying, “I wanted to donate to an LGBTQIA+ organization since I’m a queer individual who dedicates a lot of my life’s mission to help people like myself. I also have always wanted to help children, especially queer children, find safe housing. We decided to donate there, also due to it being a local organization, and also SisterLove—an organization to eradicate the advertising of HIV, sexual and reproductive health rights, while also impacting women’s lives through education, prevention, and support. That is what our production of V Monologues was all about—education and support of reproductive health and rights. I’m grateful that we chose these two organizations, and that we raised so much to aid them in their missions.”

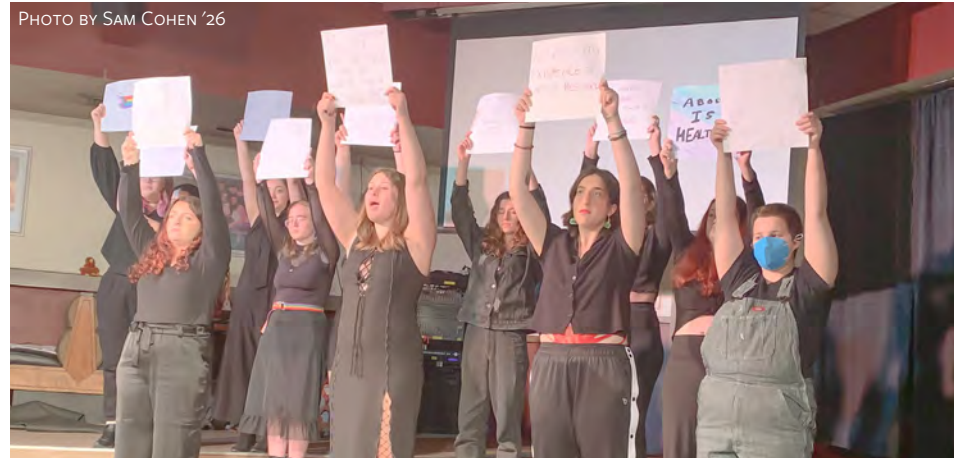
When audiences entered, they were

given a choice of wearing a green, yellow or red sticker, indicating how comfortable they were with cast members approaching them and setting the precedent of just how interactive yet respectful of boundaries this performance would be.

Arnold’s opening comments at the performance’s beginning included how this production would be an attempt to step towards a more inclusive version of the show, making it about the stories of people who are experiencing it presently. The environment for the next two hours was light-hearted and engaging, while also allowing ample room for cast members to speak profoundly on their experiences with sexuality, gender identity, relationships, the empowerment of female bodies and the overturning of Roe v. Wade.

“We decided very early on there was going to be no question what our show was asking you to do, and there was gonna be no question about when it was going to happen. It had to happen right before midterms, it needed to be on the minds of people who were going to see it when they went to vote,” says Arnold, surrounding their decision to focus this production on the overturning of Roe v. Wade that occurred in June. They continue, “We are in a state where abortion rights are very much on the ballot in the mid-term elections and midterm elections tend to have less voter turnout because people just don’t see it as important...I just decided very early on that there was no way I could do this show and ignore that context.”

“The Vagina Monologues” script was passed down to Arnold from Phi Johnson-Grimes ‘22, who directed the production last year. One of the most notable contributions Johnson-Grimes made to the production was replacing those with potentially harmful themes with those self-written by cast members surrounding their own experiences, and Arnold



“The Vagina Monologues: A Retelling” shared messages of reproductive rights and more before the midterm elections.

noted, “We wanted to continue this but in a more extreme way...It was about making sure that we were diversifying the voices in the best way we could from the people that were interested.”

Over a three week period, the cast and crew of “The Vagina Monologues” met twice a week and focused on building community, doing activities together and spitballing ideas for the production’s “interludes.” Arnold and Coffin also held individual rehearsals with cast members where they worked on their individual monologues. “After writing my own monologue based on my own life last year for ‘Vagina Monologues,’ I knew exactly where the majority of the authors/actors of their own monologues were going to go. I knew that their experiences and lives were their own, and wanted to let them know that we were/are a safe space for them to share whatever they were most comfortable with. I wanted audiences, too, to learn something, and to know that vaginas aren’t a scary topic to cover—that they shouldn’t be looked down upon, and rather should be learned about, laughed about and loved,” says Coffin.

Cast members Lili Daskais ‘23 and Dylan Sheppard ‘25 both wrote and per-

formed their own monologues for this year’s production. Daskais stated, “I tend to write a lot at first and it can be pretty disorganized so once I had a draft, Haley helped me structure it and gave me suggestions for revision....Haley gave me a lot of freedom with what I wanted to do and write about; they mainly made sure that my monologue fit well into their overall vision for the piece and that it was connected to the anatomy in some way—I’m talking, of course, about the vagina...Interacting with the audience was such a blast; I felt like I really connected with audience members, even if it was just for a moment.”

Sheppard wrote, “Talking about periods is a taboo and I always feel weird bringing it up unprompted. I am grateful for this experience because it gave me that prompt. I worked for most of the time with Spyro and we worked on figuring out the best way to say everything I wanted to within a short period of time. He was also very supportive when I was having more rough days with it and I really appreciate that. If I wasn’t in such a supportive environment it would have been more difficult to tell my story. So I’m grateful for this experience.”

## Collegium Musicum: a modern 16th century performance

BY JULIA LENNON  
STAFF WRITER

The Muhlenberg College Collegium Musicum was held in the Egner Memorial Chapel on Saturday Nov. 5. The group was composed of students and faculty who performed 16th century renaissance music. Zach Kleiman ‘25 said he was “looking forward to getting to know music more” in this experience.

Megan Lyttle ‘23, who played bass recorder in the concert, said before the show, “I enjoy being able to show this music to other people because it’s an opportunity most people don’t get until college.” The lights were warmly lit above, encapsulating the musicians on the small stage as the audience sat shrouded in shadow. After a brief introduction by Ted Conner, Ph.D., singers ranging from bass to soprano stood while bows glided across string instruments and percussion beats filled the air. Conner noted to the audience, “This would have been the music people were playing at home in the



Muhlenberg College Collegium perform primarily early music.

1500s.” As each soloist sang their piece, the rest of the group faced the singer admirably, fully attentive. One soloist, Yael Beer ‘24, later commented that singing on stage “was quite fun.” Beer was asked what they thought about when they were singing, to which Beer answered, “I was actually thinking about my physical body, my breath and the position of my chest and chin.”

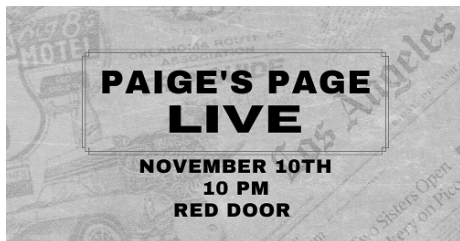
The collegium took a brief intermission to tune their instruments. Conner later explained that the weather has a

very big effect on the strings due to the way the instruments were designed. The instruments utilize gut strings instead of steel strings, therefore, they go out of tune easily in slight changes in heat or cold. Conner announced the group’s love for the next song, “The Lowest Trees Have Tops” by John Dowland, saying, “We like this one because it has the word spleen in it.” This prodded an eruption of laughter from the silent audience. The collegium then played a song, “No grave for woe” by Philip Rosseter, prefaced by

Conner’s comment that, although he was aware that he was potentially exaggerating, “this piece may be the coolest piece on the planet.” He told the audience the melodies were supposed to imitate the mischievousness of fairies.

At the end of the concert, performer Jill Stephen, Ph.D., was asked her opinion on the organization. She said, “I love it. I taught at Muhlenberg for 35 years and I just couldn’t leave the school.” Thus, she has been with the group ever since. Stephen continued with a laugh, “The group has great vibes.” She added that the group is especially talented because they rehearse ridiculously hard music with a cheerful dedication. Conner told The Weekly that he started the group 25 years ago in order to share the music that he loves. He noted that the word “collegium” to him means a group of friends that get together and play music. Lyttle remarked that Thursday rehearsals are always something she looks forward to, “just to come together to make music.”





## Paige's Page

BY PAIGE WEISBURG  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Hey besties! Welcome to this week's edition of Paige's Page! When you are reading this, Paige's Page Live is happening TONIGHT (Nov. 10) at 10 p.m. in the Red Door! I hope you can all be there, I am really excited to get to hear your questions in person, and hopefully give some really fun and helpful advice. This week I want to prepare you for the chaos that will ensue this evening, so there will be no theme! Let's get into these questions!

**Q** Hi Paige, my friend and I have different political beliefs, and it is putting a strain on our relationship. How can we work through this?

Hey bestie, this is really difficult. With election day happening earlier this week, I'm sure you and your politically-active friends have been very anxious about the midterm elections this year. I know I have been, especially here. As a politi-

cal science major, this is something I have thought about a lot. In my classes, I have talked to a lot of people I disagree with in an ideological sense; however, I enjoy the conversations we are willing to have with each other. Not everyone wants to talk about politics or the problems going on in our country, and that is okay. Don't force these kinds of conversations. Ultimately, your friend probably isn't going to change your mind and you won't change theirs either. You are definitely not friends because of the way you think about politics, you are friends because you like each other as people. You do other things together. If this is the thing that you think will end your friendship, which obviously you don't want to happen, set a boundary with them. Maybe tell them you don't want to talk about politics with them anymore because it isn't productive and helpful for your personal relationship. There are ways to have deep and meaningful relationships with your friends that don't involve conversations of fundamental disagreement. There is an exception to this though—if the way your friend views the world is harmful to you or other people, it is okay to not want to be close with this person.

**Q** Hey Paige, how do I wean off my coffee addiction?

Hi bestie, fantastic question! The way I had been doing that for a while was by changing the times I would drink coffee. I would stop by 5 p.m., get it earlier in the day because I am one of those people

that enjoys coffee as an accessory and will drink it over the course of several hours. I also would try to have it only a couple of days a week—like if I have a 9:30 class, I'll go before to wake me up, but on days I start later I would go without. I also really don't drink coffee on the weekends unless I'm going to get it off-campus because Java is closed. I have not been very good this semester about keeping caffeine a less regular part of my day-to-day life. As I am writing this I am trying to avoid going back to sleep because I didn't have coffee today, and I am tired. But when I was trying to hold off on coffee everyday, those things were working super well for me. It does take your body a lot of time to adjust to this though, so be kind to yourself and listen to your body telling you what it needs.

**Q** Hi Paige. I joined a club and I really love the concept of it, but I don't seem to fit in with the people. Should I continue being a part of the club or should I look elsewhere for a group I'll fit into more?

Hey bestie! This is actually really great, I know it can probably feel really isolating right now because you aren't vibing with the people, but you have a lot of options for things you can do to improve this situation. Obviously I don't know what club this is, but if it is an activity-based club where you are just going to be around other people while doing a task, then you can take these skills and do the activity either on your own or with your

friends without having to be in a group of people you don't vibe with (I did this and I do recommend). Another thing you can do is drag your friends. Cliques are so high school, but bring people you enjoy to activities you like and maybe you can all make friends and all you needed was a buffer. You could push yourself a little bit and try to make friends so you can do the thing you enjoy. Weigh the pros and cons. If you really love what the club does and you can't find a way to do the activities the club does on your own, ask yourself what matters more to you. All of that being said, I still think it is worth your time to explore other things that Muhlenberg can offer to you! There are not a lot of people here, but there is so much potential to meet new people and try new things. I know this doesn't fully answer your question, but it doesn't really matter what I think because I can't tell you how you feel. If you decide to stop going for now and want to come back to it later, there may be people you enjoy being around so that is always an option too. You got this!

Paige's Page Live is officially happening! TONIGHT Nov. 10 at 10 p.m. in the Red Door! Can't wait to see you all there! We will also be going live on the @bergweekly instagram if you can't make it in person!

You can submit questions to <https://tinyurl.com/paigespagequestion>. It will also be linked in my Instagram bio— @paigeweisburg and in The Muhlenberg Weekly Instagram Linktree.

# Being Fake is the new real

## !!!⚠️ Time to BeReal ⚠️!!!

BY JOHNNY VEGLIA  
CO-A&C EDITOR

The new social media trend is BeReal. For those who do not know, the application allows users to "BeReal" by posting two pictures of whatever they may be doing during a specific moment in the day. It could be 1:30 p.m., 10:30 p.m., or 1:30 a.m., but it's time to BeReal regardless. However, some users, including myself, like to wait for the perfect moment to take a snapshot of their daily actions. If I receive a notification at 1:30 p.m., I might wait until I'm not just sitting alone in my room to make my life look exciting for friends.

The other beautiful thing about the app is you can have an extremely exciting day in New York City or even on campus, but then the notification doesn't go off until 11:30 p.m. What is even the point? This also creates tension within ourselves to constantly be doing something exciting because we never know when the warning might strike. It consumes us and makes us think we are unproductive if we are just vibing in our rooms or lying in bed. When doing something exciting, my next thought is if it's time to BeReal

rather than engaging with the day ahead. I want to capture the perfect moment, rather than to just live and breathe in the moment. This then goes into making sure your phone is charged to make sure you have the camera ready. It's dreadful, but it's being real.

Another wonderful component is the waiting. If I get the notification at 10:17 a.m. and I am not feeling it, I will wait. However, when I wait, I begin to feel like an imposter and never know the proper moment to capture the late BeReal. Should I post whenever I'm not alone, or when I feel not alone?

The memories are fun and it's always funny to see everyone capture their BeReal right when the notification goes off, but what is the purpose of the app? Are we really capturing our true selves if we are just sitting in a chair in our room? But then are we "real" if we post seven hours late? My suggestion is to BeReal whenever you want, after all, the memories are just for you.

Allow yourself to BeReal in the ways you see fit because it's your life and your own reality. Being real is based on when your reality wants to shine, not when an app tells you to do so.

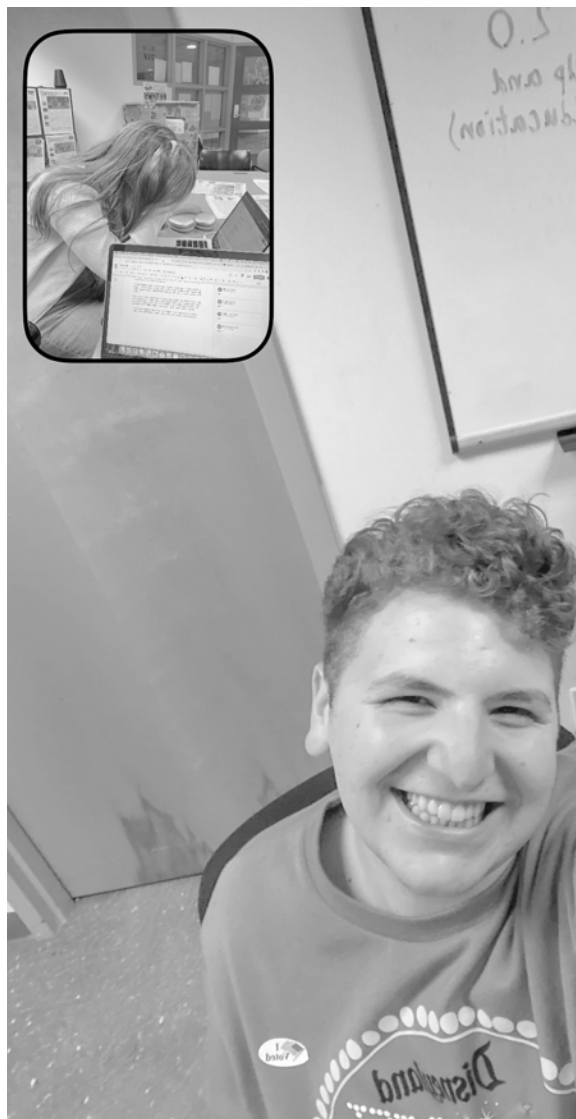


PHOTO BY JOHNNY VEGLIA '24

No matter the situation, it's time to BeReal.

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor ([bergweeklyoped@gmail.com](mailto:bergweeklyoped@gmail.com)) or the Editor-in-Chief ([weeklyeditor@gmail.com](mailto:weeklyeditor@gmail.com)) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.





# Listen Loudly

A creative space for marginalized voices



## counting grains of sand.

By Rowan Hauk  
Contributing Writer

One more time the many go out and  
leave me be.

Oh how it empties me. Carves out  
my charisma and I am little again.  
Water eyes, squished hands trying  
to grasp up, please I need.

You to prove my left shoulder  
venom wrong. Let me in.  
Laugh with me. Spend the time.  
They go.  
Never knowing till I do and it guts.

All provide the whining child's wants  
but what a patronizing kindness to  
the head. "Take it. Now go. Sit. Be  
quieted and let the real people continue.  
Let us talk and live and bond. Go back.  
Your place carved in the wall"

Drown in the space between us.  
Try and try but never see why  
you can't reach.

Loneliness is truly a desert instead  
of the canonical sea for there is no  
life, just time looking to the sun  
for something it can never give me.

## Waves and Currents

By Mustafa Hall  
Op/Ed Editor

It boils up  
    within until it's spat out  
Takes the shape of your own dark reflection on the ground  
or the form of a door slam.  
    It speaks softly and lives secretly on the skin and  
        behind the eyes  
        (you're alone)  
        (u are)  
        begging fa air tuh  
        Breathe.  
Tuh Breathe the denseness of falseness  
    It has an odd way  
        of weighing you  
down but also lifting yuh up  
above everyone and errything from a dizzying height  
    And smudging the inner walls of yuh head  
        w/ colorful lies  
        and colorless truths  
Let me be at  
    peace.  
Let me  
    be on the  
ground and  
    light again.  
Let me live in the center of myself.  
I am never alone.

# beauty tips

to feel and look good

looks as good as a professional blowout!

By Valerie Kusner  
Staff Writer

Formal season is right around the corner, but that doesn't mean you need to spend hundreds of dollars on your dress and glam. I have compiled a list of five ways you can have a stress-free day while also feeling confident in your own skin.

### Get a spray tan.

If you're looking for a subtle bronze natural tan for formal, then Baja Beach Tanning is the spot for you. For only \$10, first-time users are able to get an airbrush tan that lasts for several days. This is a much safer option than tanning beds which increase the chances of developing skin cancer. Before going into your session, remember to shower and exfoliate for streak-free results. I would recommend getting a spray tan the night before formal, so you are able to wait the full 8-12 hours without getting any precipitation on your skin as water can affect the way the tan develops.

Baja Beach Tanning  
4763 Tilghman St, Allentown, PA 18104

### Use Velcro curlers to style your hair.

Use velcro curlers after you blow dry your hair to achieve a voluminous loose-curl look. While sectioning your hair, it should be around the same size as the curler you are using. For best results, put the curlers in while your hair is still hot from the blow dry so that the curl holds in place. Use the curlers before doing your makeup, so by the time you finish, the curlers should be ready to take out. This method saves money and

### Get your nails and eyebrows done.

At Empire Beauty School, an eyebrow wax plus a basic manicure and pedicure is \$33 in total. This is a much cheaper option than going to a traditional nail salon. Booking hair, nail, skin, makeup and spa services are normally offered at a variety of different beauty schools for half the cost. Since students are determined to become licensed stylists, they often will spend more time and care with each of their clients ensuring that they walk away happy.

Empire Beauty School  
1634 MacArthur Rd, Whitehall, PA 18052

### Buy a basic dress and spice it up with jewelry and shoes.

Finding a dress online can be stressful. You never know what you're actually going to get in the mail, and needing to return an item a few days before your formal is risky. Instead of focusing on buying brightly colored or patterned dresses, choose a simple color that you can make pop with jewelry and shoes you probably already have in your closet. Hoop earrings are a great way to make a simple outfit pop!

### Get good sleep the night before.

I know what you're thinking—this is pretty obvious. However, sleep might get overlooked if you're stressed about what to wear and how long you need to prepare. Getting a good night's rest will not only make you feel good but will also make you look your best in the photos you take at the event.





# Are the NFL's 'independent' neurologists truly independent?

BY TOM HILLER  
MANAGING EDITOR

It's a Thursday night game and Miami Dolphins' quarterback Tua Tagovailoa walks up to the line of scrimmage. Before every play, he analyzes the Cincinnati Bengals' defense. Depending on how his opponents react to his offensive's formation, Tagovailoa might call an audible he knows will exploit the defense. He doesn't.

Tagovailoa commands the center to snap him the ball. He flips around, as if to hand the ball off to the running back on a designed run play but instead keeps it. Rolling to the left side of the field, staying within the play design, Tagovailoa hopes to catch the defense off guard with a pass play. Unfortunately, the defense reacts correctly, tightening pass coverage down the field while the defensive line applies pressure to Tagovailoa. As he attempts to flee from the attacking bodies an opposing player grabs him and swings him to the ground, ending the play. No worries, Tagovailoa will get back up. He doesn't.

Tagovailoa remains on the ground, slowly rolling onto his back, his arms and hands forcibly locked into a contorted position, better known in the medical world as the 'fencing position.' Team doctors rushed over to him, and before too long, the entire field gathered to the scene to show respect. Tagovailoa is lifted onto the stretcher, fully secured and strapped down.

After only a few short hours, he was discharged from the hospital and diagnosed with a concussion. What makes his concussion particularly uncommon and



INFOGRAPHIC BY TOM HILLER '23

Several concussion symptoms deemed by the NFL concerning is that it was likely that the quarterback had been recovering from a possible concussion while the events of that Thursday night game occurred.

During a play four days earlier on a Sunday game against the Buffalo Bills, Tagovailoa made similar contact to the ground which caused him to involuntarily stumble after getting back up off the turf. The stumble prompted Tagovailoa to be put into the NFL's gametime concussion protocol. Independent neurologists determined that he was non-symptomatic: it was ruled that the stumble was caused from an unrelated back injury and was released to return to play.

To call the doctors who cleared Tagovailoa 'independent' is a bit misleading.

While it is true that these medical professionals are no longer hired by the individual club teams, the NFL does employ them as unaffiliated neurotrauma consultants. Although these consultants should be able to assess Tagovailoa's team without any bias, the subtle pressure from the league to allow a star quarterback to return to the game might have been the case for the Sunday game.

What made this situation potentially life-threatening is the possibility that Tagovailoa could have developed Second Impact Syndrome (SIS)—when someone gets a second concussion before the first one has had a chance to heal. According

to the Mayo Clinic, SIS may result in fatal brain swelling. If Tagovailoa was prevented from returning to play during that Sunday game against the Bills and placed into the NFL's post-game concussion protocol, he would not have been put in the position to be reinjured in the Thursday game against the Bengals.

A knee injury has objective symptoms—doctors can physically see and diagnose an issue. Whereas a brain injury, can be undetected and potentially masked by the patient due to how subjective symptoms can be. Motivated to stay in the game, Tagovailoa might have decided to hide his ailments in order to return to the field.

Tagovailoa has since fully recovered and has been cleared to return to play. During his first game back, against the Pittsburgh Steelers on Sunday Night Football, Tagovailoa managed to lead the team to victory, 16-10.

The problem, however, still remains. The unaffiliated neurotrauma consultants are hired and/or compensated by the NFL. A subconscious bias can influence these neurologists to look past certain symptoms if that means returning a star player to the field. In order to protect players from long-term health problems related to head injuries, the NFL should rely on a player's personal doctor to clear them to return to play. If you get a concussion when working at a warehouse, your boss doesn't drag out the warehouse neurologist to assess your ability to return to work. An independent concussion specialist is the decision-maker whether someone is able to return to work. So, why can't the NFL follow that same model?

## The sole rehearsal

*Mules women's basketball competes in their lone preseason scrimmage*

BY EVAN SCHLOTTERBECK  
STAFF WRITER

On Friday, Nov. 4, the Muhlenberg women's basketball team got their first taste of game action when they took on Delaware Valley University in their first and only contest of the preseason.

The game was divided into four quarters, each treated like its own game. The Mules split the scrimmage games with Delaware Valley, starting with expected stiffness and nerves but then settling in nicely to what was a very competitive and high-level affair.

"Overall, the scrimmage went very well," commented Abigail Scheidel '24. "We had high energy and worked well as a team, demonstrating lots of potential for the upcoming season."

A goal for the squad, this season, is to play a more run-and-gun style of basketball. The philosophy of the run-and-gun is being the team that takes the most shots in the game and transitions from end to



PHOTO COURTESY OF RACHEL SAXTON '25

The Muhlenberg women's basketball team is all smiles after their first scrimmage of the season.

end with pace and precision. Keeping their foot on the gas is a way the Mules want to suffocate other teams offenses.

"As a team, we pushed the ball really well in transition," said Scheidel. "[That] is something we work on every day at practice. Pushing the ball at the defense every possession to make them tire out is

really important for us."

Another element of the Mules' relentless tactics is in-your-face defense from the inbound. The team has concentrated on strength and conditioning during this preseason, ideally allowing them to maintain ferocious high-court pressure for most of the game.

"Our conditioning is certainly not an issue going into our first game," added forward Sara Peretti '23. "In the second quarter, our Coach [Rohn] wanted to try to implement our full-court press. The team executed our press so well that we scored back-to-back layups from quick steals in the backcourt."

Although there was an abundance of positive outlooks to take from Friday, it is important to recognize that this was the Mules' first game action, and there were a few things the team acknowledged that they can continue to work on before their first official match.

"We can [also] work on our ball movement and post-entry passes," noted Peretti. "We need to limit turnovers this year and make every possession count. We have so many talented shooters on our team!"

"Before our first game, it is really important for us to work on our defense,"

SEE REHEARSAL PAGE 11



# Straight from the source

## *What makes a mule? An athletic trainer's perspective*



PHOTO FROM MUHLENBERGSPORTS.COM

BY OLIVIA OBERMAN  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

Most of Muhlenberg's fall athletic teams have finished their season or are facing regional opponents. Seldom does it feel natural for an athlete to suddenly quit their daily routines which include games, practices and lifts at the sound of a final whistle. For this reason, the transitions between in-season and off-season and/or the jump from one season to another, can be extremely ambiguous to navigate.

So, what should athletes actually be doing after their season ends? From an athletic trainer's perspective, the answers are pretty clear.

Former Muhlenberg volleyball player and current Muhlenberg assistant athletic trainer, Morgan Duggan '14 puts it best—"Rest is key."

A Muhlenberg student-athlete tends to be exceptional at a lot of things—rest, not usually being one of them.

Head Athletic Trainer Lindsay Poremba elaborates, "Active rest is very important in addition to proper hydration, nutrition and sleep. An athlete should perform a few days of light physical activity including rehab exercises in the weeks after a season ends. These physical activities should have nothing to do with the sport that they participate in so they can refresh and move their bodies differently. As for those athletes who have two seasons back to back, it is still in their best interest to take some down time to give their body some rest and avoid burnout."

Assistant Athletic Trainer Sean Morse adds, "I think we as athletic trainers understand, but it is hard to get athletes to buy into their sleep. This is when your body does all of its repair and recovery processes."

While in season, many athletes suffer injuries that require specialized care and individual rehabilitation plans from the trainers. However, the necessary steps included in injury rehabilitation do not

Athletic trainers Morse, Duggan, Poremba, Bortz, and Scalise work everyday to help shape our athletes into the best that they can be.

include a timestamp; they are aimed to be followed through until an injury is fully recovered.

Duggan emphasizes, "Athletes will go through the rehab process in season and forget that it's something they need to continue to build on once the season is over. A lot of athletes focus on the bigger picture stuff before they take care of the more important details such as: balance, mobility, core strength and isolation exercises on areas of weakness."

Assistant Athletic Trainer Chelsea Bortz adds, "Athletes should continue with weight training programs and continue recovering from chronic injuries and or rehabilitating them. More importantly, athletes don't always prioritize their nutrition. I focus on an athlete's nutrition. The better your nutrition the better your recovery is going to be overall. Your diet can control swelling, muscle growth, maintenance and your weight."

Make sure you're eating enough protein. You should be eating 0.8-1.2 grams of protein per body pound of your weight, which may need to be worked up to. Do not restrict yourself or diet, you need carbs and fats to fuel your body. Stay hydrated, water plays a role in almost every part of your body, it is important in order to make you feel alert and impacts your mood which affects your performance inside and outside of athletics."

While there are many aspects to a successful recovery journey which athletes can improve on, there are also mistakes that can be avoided before the recovery process even starts.

Assistant Athletic Trainer Jamie Scalise notes, "I feel that it is very crucial for athletes to be transparent regarding their injuries with our staff."

It may not seem like the most rewarding decision for athletes to approach an athletic trainer with symptoms of an injury, if it will hinder their playing time in season. However, there are several rea-

sons as to why this thought process is counter productive.

Morse offers an explanation, "The biggest trend that we see with concussions, specifically, is that athletes wait too long to see us. Rather than allowing us to evaluate their case right away, they wait, which actually sets back their recovery time and could put that athlete at the risk of suffering a more significant injury. Once we diagnose one, we are productive in taking care of it after the fact. The most important part is trying to encourage athletes to see us early."

Scalise continues, "As an athletic trainer, it is my job to properly evaluate and assess injuries. Then to bring the Athlete through injury rehabilitation. Finally, return the athlete to play. Sometimes athletes think that we just keep them out of participating, but that is not the case. My philosophy is to make sure that I keep the athletes participating in a safe manner, not keep them out."

Given that athletic trainers are surrounded by athletes 24/7, it is not surprising to hear that they have picked up on the habits of consistently healthy and high performing athletes.

Bortz offers her insight, "High performing athletes are recovering properly, getting in and taking care of their bodies, taking time to let their bodies relax, prioritizing proper nutrition and sleep and having set schedules."

The physical aspects of taking care of yourself are imperative. Interestingly, the athletic trainers brought light to the mental hurdles of college athletics and how productive athletes handle themselves.

Poremba elaborates, "I have observed that these athletes tend to have a quiet self confidence about themselves [and] are mentally focused and optimistic; these qualities in addition to keeping themselves physically healthy are pretty good ingredients to mix together for success."

The scrimmage was a huge step from the first day of practice, and I am noticing that the more we continue to work, the more we continue to grow."

"We need to keep pushing each other every day in practice," added Scheidel. "Playing good defense, communicating, running our plays and pushing the ball are some of the important things that we need to keep working on so we can continue to raise our ceiling. We need to do

The importance of focusing on your mental health when dealing with injuries, was also highlighted. Morse provides an example, "To an outside observer concussions may not always seem like a significant injury. This takes a toll on the mental health aspect of concussion recovery."

Bortz continues, "There's a huge mental aspect to injuries. Injuries big or small may have an impact on that individual. They need to take time to actually process their emotions surrounding the injury. Athletes that have productive attitudes tend to recover faster. I recommend that these athletes talk to someone, because it will help significantly on a performance level."

The athletic trainers are resources for a multitude of athletic and personal hurdles, not just injuries.

Chelsea distilled the mission of her office saying, "Athletic trainers are here to listen to everything and anything."

When Scalise was asked what he loves most about his job he replied, "I love the athletes and colleagues that I have been extremely lucky to have met throughout my 24-year career. The relationships are very special to me. I also enjoy watching my athletes achieve success when they return following an injury in which I worked with them."

The Muhlenberg Sports Medicine team passionately lays the groundwork for athletic success at both the individual and team levels. They are simply, always there. Poremba encapsulates this truth in a final comment about her team. "The fact that every single one of them brings something unique to the table that makes us whole and well rounded, leading us to provide the absolute best sports medicine care we can provide to our student-athletes. We are family. We would pretty much do anything for each other, and we do!"

each of these things to reach our goal of being a championship team."

The small details have been sorted, any remaining rust has been shaken off, and game-day traditions have been officially implemented—finishing almost all of the team's preparation for this year's campaign. The Mules are now less than a week away from traveling to Oneonta, NY, to take on Hartwick College in their opener on Nov. 12.

### FROM REHEARSAL PAGE 10

said Scheidel. "We played good defense in the scrimmage, but there is still a lot we can work on to limit scoring opportunities for the other team. We can also continue to work on communicating both offensively and defensively to help us work better as a team and as one unit. Talking through each play on both ends will help

us improve greatly."

The season opener is quickly approaching for the Mules, and if their scrimmage taught them one thing, it's that they're primed to challenge the rest of the Centennial Conference for the ultimate prize.

"One impressive thing we showed on Friday is that we are incredibly athletic," commented Peretti. "Our rebounding looked great, the conditioning was fantastic, and we also made a lot of tough shots.



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## Next up NCAs

### Men's soccer wins CC Championship, upsetting Hopkins

By CAITLIN KINNENAR  
ROOKIE WRITER

The men's soccer team has seen nothing but success since advancing to the Centennial Conference playoffs. The team recently traveled to Lancaster, Pennsylvania on Nov. 4 to compete against the seventh-ranked team in the nation. In order to win against the dominant Franklin & Marshall College Diplomats, the Mules needed to trust in their training, ability to work as a team and the strong bond they have cultivated. One of the team's captains, Josh Bordwick '23, described this closeness that the team forged, which was able to shine through on the field. "The brotherhood exists beyond the field. This team is not just a team on the field, but a family. Our bond and relationships go far beyond just 'teammates' and have truly morphed into family."

The ability to work as a team is clear by how strong they have been competing. The team has maintained a clean sheet in the playoffs, averaging only 1.1 goals against (GA) throughout the 20 game regular season. Additionally, Trevor Mikuta '26 scored the Mules first goal just one minute and three seconds into their game against F&M.

'Berg was able to go into this important game with the determination that led them to victory. Bordwick reflects, "resilience and desire was key for our squad against F&M. Going out and scoring first to set the tone allowed us to play our style and force F&M out of their comfort zone. We showed an incredible amount of resilience to keep a clean sheet on the road against the #7 team in the nation, and the desire to push each other to victory brought us there."

This desire for victory was clear from the minute the first goal was scored by Mikuta. Mikuta was assisted by Taylan Akdag '23, who has a team-leading seven assists this season overall. The second goal was scored by Chris Richards '23, the leading goal scorer for the team with 11 this year, assisted by David Goldstein '23. In addition to these already impressive stats, Goalie Ben Mulford '26 saved seven shots on goal, refusing to let the Diplomats score.

After the phenomenal win against F&M, the men's soccer team was eager to continue on their winning streak as they faced the 19th ranked team in the na-



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRIS RICHARDS '23

Muhlenberg Men's Soccer team celebrates their Centennial Conference Championship.

tion, Johns Hopkins. Bordwick described the mindset of the team going into their third playoff game. "We are just focusing on ourselves and controlling what we can control. We know the opposition we are playing like to dominate in terms of possession, but we can't focus and change what we do because of them. Do you have to adapt as a team? Of course, but we really want to focus on our strengths going into this game. And, of course, the main goal is winning the Centennial Conference Championship."

With this exact focus, control and ability to adapt, the team was able to achieve their goal of winning the Centennial Conference Championship for the first time since 2014. Muhlenberg scored the extraordinary win to achieve the Conference Championship title, beating Johns Hopkins 5-4 in the penalty kicks after preventing the Blue Jays from scoring all game. The anticipation of who was going to take home the Conference trophy was over when the winning penalty kick was scored by Jake Mendelson '25 after a scoreless tie, securing the Mules a spot in the NCAA Tournament. Men's soccer was able to continue their pattern of never giving up a single goal in the play-

offs thanks to strong defense and goalie Mulford jumping to turn away the ball at every chance, 20 in all, demonstrating his quick reflexes and application of his coaches' pointers. Richards and Akdag were among those with successful kicks into the net during penalty kicks.

The win against the Blue Jays led Muhlenberg to become the first fifth seeded team in Centennial Conference history to win the championship. This will be the first time the Mules have won the Centennial Conference Tournament since 2014.

With all the anticipation of a game so competitive, a number of Muhlenberg students traveled to Baltimore to cheer on the team, including Rachel Saxton '25, who shared her experience at the game and excitement to be able to attend it. "This opportunity doesn't happen often so I think I speak for everyone when I say I wanted to be there in support of the team and our school. It shows that we are a very supportive community and that we want nothing but the best for each other."

With the amount of success that the men's soccer team has seen over the past weekend, the crowd radiated with enthusiasm as the final goal was scored. Saxton

reflected on the chance to watch such an accomplishment for Muhlenberg. "First of all it still doesn't feel real that I was there to be honest! I would say that everyone was on the edge of their seat for this game. Not only watching 90 minutes of play but also 20 minutes of overtime and penalty kicks it was thrilling to watch that final goal go in. From the crowd everyone was screaming, clapping, jumping and cheering and so I would say there was a lot of energy during the game and a lot of positive emotions showing throughout the time we were there. No one gave up or gave in on the field and in the stands which was awesome!"

Now it's onto Nationals. The NCAA tournament features the top 64 of the 408 Division III men's soccer teams. The tournament starts Nov. 11 in Lexington, Virginia, and ends at the final four in Salem, Virginia in the beginning of December. Looking forward to their game on Nov. 12 in Lexington, VA the Mules are ready to continue on their winning streak against Case Western Reserve University and bring home more success.

Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Nov. 10 - Nov. 16

#### Men's Basketball



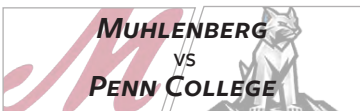
Sat, Nov. 12 @ 2:00 p.m.  
Memorial Hall

#### Men's Soccer



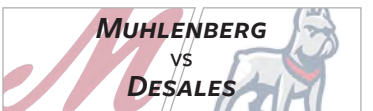
Sat, Nov. 12 @ 3:30 p.m.  
Lexington, Va.

#### Wrestling



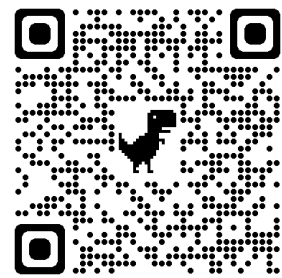
Sat, Nov. 12 @ 6:45 p.m.  
Williamsport, Pa.

#### Women's Basketball



Wed, Nov. 16 @ 6:00 p.m.  
Center Valley, Pa.





THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2022  
VOLUME CXLIV, ISSUE XI

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## NEWS

Alumni spotlight on Marek Tomanek '18



read more on page 4

## ARTS & CULTURE

"Oedipus" debuts



read more on page 5

## OP/ED

Brianna Kovit '23 talks about the happiest time of the year.



read more on page 8

## SPORTS

The history of Muhlenberg sports.



read more on page 12

# "Spring Awakening" debuts *read on page 6*



photo courtesy of Lorenzo Antigua '24

# Biannual post-election discussion hosted at 'Berg

BY HARRY GLICKLIN  
LAYOUT EDITOR

As Pennsylvania plans to welcome a new set of leaders, including Senator-elect John Fetterman, Governor-elect Josh Shapiro (and the reelection of Representative Susan Wild), Muhlenberg's political science department is revamping its "Midterms" series, beginning with the Election Postmortem Event. Led by Professors of Political Science Brian Mello, Ph.D., Jack Gambino, Ph.D., and Chris Borick, Ph.D., was a roundtable presentation and conversation on the fresh midterm election decisions and voters.

To begin, Borick discussed the history of the two-party system in regard to midterm elections. Traditionally, he noted, the current president's party is put at a disadvantage, as the party not in the White House feels threatened by the lack of congressional control. However, this was not the case in the 2022 midterms; in fact, Democrats kept their control of the Senate, and though it is still uncertain which party will have a lead in the House of Rep-

resentatives upon installation, it is not as overwhelmingly Republican as would've been historically predicted. This brings up the question of why the Democratic candidates were able to prevail in such an unprecedented



photo by Katherine Conlon '24

Muhlenberg faculty host fourth event in Midterm Election series to debrief from the recent midterms.

ed way this election season.

From this point on, each speaker referenced two key motivating factors for this result: reproductive rights and the influence of former President Donald Trump. Borick stated that the importance of reproductive rights and the power given

to the states finally gave people something worth voting for—their own human rights. Student attendee Maya Brooks '24 stated, "Pollsters underestimated the impact of Dobbs [v. Jackson Women's Health Organization] because it affects a number of voters that don't have to pretend to be impacted anymore. White women are realizing that they have something to lose; they're now voting for themselves." Borick also included that the Trump-endorsed candidates were not set up to win upon this endorsement. In Pennsylvania specifically, Doug Mastriano,

outside of their party.

Gambino went on to discuss the issue of voter fraud nationally, including a statistic that "71 percent of Americans believed that democracy was threatened, but in the same study, only seven percent thought it was a big issue." Gambino noted that there were a large number of election-denying candidates that ran for office, and even some that won. For the purpose of this article, "election-denying candidates" or "election deniers" refers to people who believe that the result of the 2020 presidential election between former President Trump and current President Joe Biden is false, or influenced by forms of fraud. Overall, Gambino stated, trust in elections has declined. According to his observations, there are little-to-no signs of voter fraud in the US in any recent elections, something he believes the country should be proud of, but this doesn't stop it from being a "mobilizing myth." As a Democratic Michigan voter stated, according to Gambino, the culture has become either "I win" or "you cheated," and that is not democracy.

Gambino also stressed the topic of democracy in elections, specifically with the amount of money poured into campaigns. A whopping \$17 billion (with a B!) was spent on this election cycle alone. This number is not shocking when considering the volume and frequency

SEE ELECTION PAGE 4

gubernatorial candidate, and Mehmet Oz, MD, senatorial candidate, were both endorsed by the former commander-in-chief, but in a swing state that is as "purple" as Pennsylvania is, this move created more polarization, and may have caused some Republicans to vote for candidates



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

11/07/2022

Walz/Brown (North) Parking Lot: Report of illegally parked vehicle with unpaid parking tickets, vehicle booted, boot later removed.

Martin Luther Lot: Report to jump start vehicle, Campus Safety Officer unable to start vehicle.

Taylor Hall: Report of smell of marijuana, area checked, nothing could be noted.

Walz Hall: Report of injured student, student transported to hospital by Campus Safety Officer.

11/09/2022

N. 22nd Street: Report to assist Allentown Police Department and Allentown EMS, no further incident.

Life Sports Center: Report of simple assault, Allentown Police Department responded, investigation to continue.

Chew Street: Report to jump start vehicle, Campus Safety Officer successfully started vehicle.

11/10/2022

Prosser Drive: Report of motor vehicle accident to College vehicle, individual spoken to, no further incident.

Chew Street: Report of fire alarm

from steam from shower, system silenced and reset.

Seegers Union: Report of fire alarm from use of smoke machine, system silenced and reset.

11/12/2022

N. Albright Avenue 400BLK: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student refused further treatment or transport.

Life Sports Center: Report of injured student, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student refused transport to hospital by Campus Safety Officer.

Trexler Library: Report of door alarm, upon arrival alarm cleared.

11/13/2022

The Village: Report of noise complaint, upon arrival resident spoken to, no further incident.

Chew Street: Report of disturbance, upon arrival individuals spoken to, no further incident.

Seegers Union: Report of theft of food, individuals identified and spoken to, no further incident.

East Hall: Report of sick student, Allentown EMS responded and transported student to hospital.

Chew Street: Report to jump start vehicle, Campus Safety Officer successfully started vehicle.

Correction: Last week we published an article, "K-Pop Club makes a splash at 'Berg." This author was the Co-Arts & Culture editor, Johnny Veglia. The author was incorrect in our initial publication.

## NEW FRESH Baked GOODS at JAVA JOE!

Pair your morning cup of  
coffee with one of our limited  
time items in the bakery case!





# DEIB statement revised by 'Berg

BY KATHERINE CONLON  
CO-NEWS EDITOR

Cardinal and Grey Spirit Day on Nov. 11 was host to several community engagement events, one of which was the unveiling of a revised Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB) Statement. Faculty, staff and students gathered in Miller Forum for the ceremony. Chief Diversity Officer and Associate Provost for Equity and Inclusion Brooke Vick, Ph.D., introduced the event saying, “this moment is a long time in the works for the members of the President’s Diversity Advisory Council or PDAC, as we refer to ourselves. This is the representation of a lot of work, a lot of collaboration, a lot of community engagement. So it’s a really exciting day for us. Because we are finally getting to reveal what we’ve been working on for such a long time.”

Following Vick’s introduction, President Kathleen Harring, Ph.D., took the stage. Harring gave the audience some context regarding the moments that led up to the decision to revise the original statement. In 2014, the College released its “Statement on Diversity.” Commenting on the original statement Harring said, “having an institutional statement that, by the way, was approved by the Board of Trustees in 2014, was powerful, since it was a public commitment, not just to our internal community, but very much to the external community... a very public commitment that Muhlenberg was invested, highly invested, deeply invested



Brooke Vick, Ph.D. introduced the event, noting “this moment is a long time in the works.”

in justice and equality.”

However, Harring noted the flaws in the initial statement and the need for change saying, “The 2014 statement did not always speak to all members of the community in ways that allowed them to see their role, their responsibility themselves in the statement. And that was a problem because we need to be a community where every individual is committed and knows what their role is in making sure that each student, each faculty member, each staff member, each... campus visitor feels that on this campus they belong, they’re welcome and they’re valued.”

Vick returned to the podium to guide spectators through additions within the new statement. The primary alteration is

the introduction of the word “belonging” to “diversity, equity and inclusion.” Vick noted that belonging was “the strongest theme that came out of everything we heard from members of the community and a number of different occasions. That when people feel the strongest sense of inclusion, when they feel welcomed at Muhlenberg... they feel like they’re part of something bigger, when there’s something about their identity that becomes connected to Muhlenberg. That [what] Muhlenberg is, a reflection of who they are.”

Other additions to the statement include acknowledging a need for equity and access, intersectional identities, power and privilege and a commitment to supporting marginalized communities.

The final section of the statement is what Vick describes as a “to-do list.” Vick commented on the items listed in this segment saying, “we wanted to include these to make sure that we had a specific guiding philosophy, but also, in some ways, a broad to-do list. These are the things that we are committed to making sure are happening. And we’re going to be accountable to those.”

Copies of the official revised draft were passed around and audience members were encouraged to discuss in groups and share their thoughts via a survey.

Some students at the event gave their opinions about the revision with The Weekly. “Overall, I am hopeful for the change that will be brought about by the revised statement. I recently joined the President’s Diversity Advisory Council (PDAC) as the interfaith student representative and I am proud of the diligent work that the team has accomplished recently. The revised statement addresses the importance of equity among various student, staff and faculty identities on campus. I also really appreciate the commitments outlined in the statement as they open up doors for actionable DEIB initiatives,” said Nour Yousry ‘23.

Abby Bresalier ‘25 gave her views saying, “I feel like the statement doesn’t outline specifically how the College will work toward achieving these goals, which is something that I was wondering while reading it. I liked seeing what the goals were, it just still left me with an unsettling feeling about how they would be attained.”

## Rangina Hamidi gives the Wallenberg Tribute Lecture

BY MATTHEW KLINGER  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Last Sunday, Nov. 13, Rangina Hamidi lectured at Muhlenberg College on Afghanistan education for the annual Wallenberg Tribute Lecture. Hamidi was born in Afghanistan before fleeing at a young age after the Soviet invasion. Her family found refuge in the United States where she went on to attend the University of Virginia, majoring in religion studies and women and gender studies. After the US overthrew the Taliban in the early 2000s, Hamidi moved back to Afghanistan where she worked tirelessly to promote education. Her efforts eventually led to her being selected as the minister of education for the country. She held that position until the Taliban retook power in 2021. She is now a professor of practice at the University of Arizona.

Hamidi began her lecture talking about the progress that was made in the twenty years after the Taliban fell and then subsequently lost when the Taliban regained power. Hamidi detailed how following the fall of Taliban rule, schools began to be built at an unprecedented rate in the country. Furthermore, the schools that were being built were open to women, a group that historically had been pre-

vented from obtaining an education. The inclusion of women led to a shift in the general belief towards education in Afghanistan: that women belonged in schools and universities. However, that progress was quickly lost once the Taliban assumed power again, with the regime quickly moving to ban girls from obtaining higher than a sixth grade education.

Hamidi then discussed the history of education in Afghanistan. According to Hamidi, although Madrasas are falsely believed to be training schools for terrorists, prior to the 20th century they acted as Afghanistan’s colleges and universities. They emphasized both religious and secular ideas, focusing on science, religion, philosophy and music. Then, at the turn of the 20th century, the modern education system was established, with the first official high school opening in the 1950s.

However, education progress in Afghanistan has not been linear. According to Hamidi, while Afghanistan has historically supported education, “instead of education being a tool to unify and solve problems, it has been used and abused by various political factions as a source of conflict.” As a result, Hamidi stated that education policies are often dependent on those in power, making it hard to have consistent education policies as political

power has shifted hands. This was seen during a series of wars and conflicts in the 20th and 21st centuries. When the Soviets invaded in 1979, they used the schools to indoctrinate teachers and children with Soviet communist ideology. Therefore, with schools being used as a Soviet political tool, attending school became discouraged as it was seen that in order for Afghanistan to win the war, its kids needed to stop being brainwashed by a politicized school system. In that way, the progress made in the earlier part of the 20th century was wiped away, as school attendance dropped. Hamidi tied that politicization into Afghanistan’s current situation as well, stating that “today when the Taliban are in power, of course they want to occupy education to serve their needs and their world view as they know it.”

Even though it can seem discouraging to see the state of Afghanistan’s education system today, Hamidi has a hopeful outlook. Towards the end of the lecture, she stated three things that needed to be changed in order for Afghanistan’s education system to work and last. All three steps were centered around her belief that “we need to rethink and redesign an education system that addresses local and global complexities.” The first step was to

move from a single delivery system to a much larger equal system perspective that combines multiple pathways. The second step was to support platforms for dialogue that include local and global actors. Lastly, Hamidi advocated for a system redesign to synergize local and global aspirations.

Hamidi ended her lecture by discussing the dangers of economizing education, caring more about the cost of implementing a sound education system than the actual quality of the system; doing so leaves education at the mercy of the economy or the budgeting policies of the current government. As Hamidi concluded, “education should not be about business, it should be about coming up with new solutions to old problems. But if we start attaching a dollar sign to [everything], then we have done an injustice.”

The lecture was well received by students. Rachelle Benitez ‘25 commented, saying that “What stuck to me the most was when she discussed the relationship between women and religion. I think she made some good points about how religion does not restrict women, but that it is often the government and men’s views of religion that do.”



FROM **ELECTION** PAGE 1

of political advertising over the past few months. Within the topic of advertising, it was noted that most commercials were “anti-campaigns,” attempting to prevent people from voting for the opposing candidate. Gambino also spoke briefly on the future of the Republican Party. Though they may come to have a slight majority in the Senate, he wonders if the party will be able to have effective government given the divide between Trump-supporting Republicans, and what is now considered more moderate Republicans.

Mello concluded the event by discuss-

ing the influence of women on voting. He stated that some are calling this mid-term election: “The Year of the Woman.” Though their total representational population in government may have dropped a bit, this election was still historic. Voters nationwide elected the most female governors ever—11—some of them serving their first term this go around. Both Oregon (D) and Arkansas (R) elected their first female governors. One of the most monumental wins came from Massachusetts (D), which elected the first-ever lesbian governor in the United States. If the PA State House changes from Republican to Democrat, he projected that State Rep-

resentative for PA’s 191st district Joanna McClinton would likely become the first woman to serve as speaker of the Pennsylvania State Legislature.

Mello also referenced the importance of people of color in elections, stating that in Pennsylvania, nine of the 19 non-incumbent women who won House seats were women of color. He also believes that without the votes of women and people of color, Democrats would not be able to win elections, noting that for Pennsylvania, 57 percent of females voted for Fetterman; without them, he wouldn’t have won the race.

Alex McCauley ‘26, a student in atten-

dance, explained how educational and informative the event was for him. “Seeing how experts took the results helped with creating a really informed opinion.” McCauley also referenced how beneficial the provided statistics were in the dialogue, and the effect they had on “show[ing] that this election really wasn’t that much of an anomaly.”

Tonight, Nov. 17, the next event in the election series, “Ugly Freedoms,” is in Miller Forum at 7 p.m.—a public talk by Elisabeth Anker, co-sponsored by the Muhlenberg Political Science Department.

## Alumni spotlight on Marek Tomanek ‘18

BY AMY SWARTZ  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Marek Tomanek, ‘18, does crucial work for the greater Northampton County community, as he is their deputy director of community and economic development. His job entails administering resources to the people and businesses of the county. Additionally, he works with nonprofits and municipalities to help aid individual communities in economic development, all to improve quality of life for the citizens under his domain. At Muhlenberg, he studied political science and economics, with a focus in local government and nonprofits, where he learned many of the skills he uses daily in his career.

Throughout his time at Muhlenberg, he was a pivotal member of the football team. Tomanek initially chose Muhlenberg “as the best fit for me as a student athlete. ‘Berg allowed me to play high quality DIII football while utilizing small class sizes with great professors to pursue my professional career.”

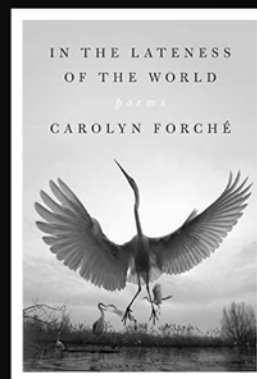
This blend of athletics and academics has allowed Tomanek to view his work from many different angles. He expressed this saying, “The critical thinking skills honed in the classroom complimented by the discipline and teamwork that came with playing college football have helped shape the way I

approach complicated municipal issues. Addressing many of the social and economic shortcomings in our area, it requires a level of teamwork with diligence and humility in order to have compassion for others while coming together to come up with ideas that turn into actions that impact people’s lives for the better.”

After graduation, he attended graduate school at Lehigh University as part of their Community Fellows program. While pursuing his masters, he worked with local governments and nonprofits, which allowed him to do meaningful work for the Easton community. After Lehigh, Tomanek was offered a position as the economic development coordinator. Tomanek describes how he “managed resources, technical and otherwise and leveraged local, state and federal partnerships to promote investment that builds upon the Easton community and economic assets while improving quality of life and place.” In July of 2022, Tomanek was appointed to his current position.

When asked about what he finds most rewarding about his field, Tomanek reflected on his career path, stating, “For me, the most rewarding aspect of my career is being able to see the tangible benefit to the communities I work with. The cliché phrase of ‘be the change you want to see in the world’ always hit home for me, so being able to bring positive changes to people and communities in need has been more rewarding than I could have imagined.”

## FALL 2022 The Living Writers Reading Series



## Carolyn Forché

Public Reading, Book Sales & Signing

November 21, 2022 | 7–8:15 p.m.

Moyer Hall, Miller Forum

Books will be available for cash or credit sales

### ABOUT CAROLYN FORCHÉ

Carolyn Forché’s first volume, *Gathering the Tribes*, winner of the Yale Series of Younger Poets Prize, was followed by *The Country Between Us*, *The Angel of History* and *Blue Hour*. Her most recent collection is *In the Lateness of the World*. She is also the author of the memoir *What You Have Heard Is True* (Penguin Random House, 2019), a devastating, lyrical and visionary memoir about a young woman’s brave choice to engage with horror in order to help others, which was nominated for the 2019 National Book Awards. She has translated Mahmoud Darwish, Claribel Alegria and Robert Desnos. Her famed international anthology, *Against Forgetting*, has been praised by Nelson Mandela as “itself a blow against tyranny, against prejudice, against injustice,” and is followed by the 2014 anthology *The Poetry of Witness*. In 1998 in Stockholm, she received the Edita and Ira Morris Hiroshima Foundation for Peace and Culture Award for her human rights advocacy and the preservation of memory and culture.

This series is free and open to the public.

 Muhlenberg College

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## enACT what's the sustainabili-TEA?

### New Vegan Chickpea Wrap in GQ (Lauren J Afran):

Come enjoy the delicious new vegan chickpea salad wrap which includes chickpea salad wrapped with lettuce and guacamole in a hand rolled tortilla. It launched at GQ and Mule Express last Thursday as an effort to hold more vegan-friendly options and alternatives for students! ‘Berg Dining, Plant-Based Advocates, and enACT can’t wait for you to try it!

### Parkway Building Eco-Highlights: (Emily Orlich)

We have some exciting eco-facts on the innovations included in our new Fahy Commons building! The building is equipped with rooftop solar panels to supply building-wide, year-round energy. The dedicated outdoor air supply will supply the whole building with fresh air. The windows are triple-glazed and are energy efficient, set up with a bird-friendly glass coating; the window abundance provides a daylight view for all interior spaces which will maintain a consistent visual connection to the great outdoors. There are planted meadows and rain gardens that allow native species of vegetation to curb stormwater as well as outdoor classrooms that have permeable paving for stormwater management. There is also a rainwater cis-

tern which allows for recycling for buildings plumbing. Lastly, there are the electric vehicle charging stations. Interested in joining a group tour to see it for yourself? Email enact@muhlenberg.edu!

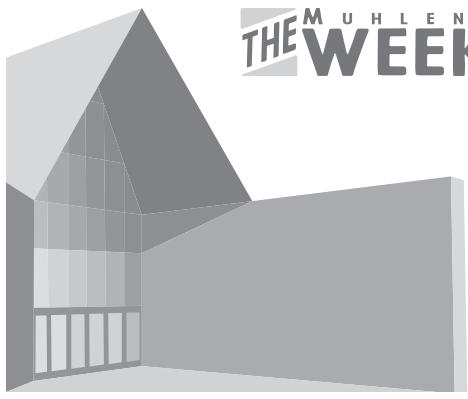
### enACT Updates (Maddie Davidson):

On Friday, Nov. 18, join enACT and MAC in Seegers 113 at 6 p.m. for Recycling Bingo to get some exciting sustainable prizes and learn some more about recycling on campus and in greater Allentown! We’re tabling for the event THIS Friday from 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. Come by for a chance to win a second bingo card!

Recycle your used Red Solo Cups (or any other #6 plastic) at the TreeHouse through a free Terracycle program! We’ve already collected and recycled hundreds of cups in only three weekends! Learn more about the program at terracycle.com or on our Instagram @enact.berg!

Interested in environmental education? Join Maddie Davidson ‘25 and Nicole Tahmoosh ‘24 through enACT, Education Society and the OCE next semester in bringing a short curriculum around local environmentalism to the 4th grade Muhlenberg Elementary class! Email enact@muhlenberg.edu if you’re interested!





"While we wait for life, life passes."

-Seneca

# Staged reading of "Oedipus" debuts

BY DANNY MILKIS  
CO-ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

The Muhlenberg department of theatre and dance held performances for a staged reading of Seneca's "Oedipus," which took place in the Dorothy Hess Baker Center for the Arts Recital Hall from Nov. 11-13. Seneca's text was adapted in the late 20th century by English poet, dramatist, translator and children's writer Ted Hughes, from a translation by David Anthony Turner.

The creative team, consisting of the director, associate professor of theatre Matt Moore, Ph.D., choreographer Ava Pirie '23, associate director Maddi Whiting '22 and stage manager/costumer Gabi McCabe '24, accomplished an exceptional amount of work in a short time, taking on a nine-hour rehearsal week, and premiered a polished, introspective and engaging final product.

"We offer this staged reading as a parable of self-discovery, a painful journey toward greater knowledge, and as a rehearsal for our ongoing encounters with the world we have made but failed to see," states Moore, in the program notes.

"I really loved working alongside the rest of the creative team," said Pirie. "The four of us [Pirie, Moore, McCabe and Whiting] shared a dedication to the project that made even our production meetings exciting and enjoyable. I admire each of their work ethic and intellect, and working next to them to create something that each of us cared about deeply was extremely fulfilling!"



Bridget Wiggan '23 and Anne Marie Alsobrook '25 in "Oedipus."

When asked about the process of digesting and synthesizing a nearly two-thousand-year-old piece of material, Andrew Gordon '23, who played Creon, spoke in great detail about the cast's textual process.

"Ted Hughes' adaptation of Seneca's Oedipus was an absolute joy to work on," said Gordon. "I loved all of the fantastical and grotesque imagery that carries the characters through their speeches, and I had a lot of fun with shaping the language in new ways throughout the rehearsal process. With the production being a staged reading, I could focus a lot more on playing with the text, as I didn't need to spend too much mental capacity on memorizing the sense monologues. By having my script on stage, I was able to

refer back to the many notes littering my book that helped to ground my performance in the textual work we focused on during the rehearsal process."

Bridget Wiggan '23, who played Oedipus, said, "One of the things that I had said when I auditioned to Matt [Moore] was that, to me, Oedipus is an actual tragedy, as opposed to a lot of the Shakespearean tragedies like 'Romeo and Juliet'... Oedipus tries his best to do everything right, even if he fails. He tries his best to make the right decisions and follow the correct path."

The production team structured the quintessential Greek chorus in a way that told the story beyond establishing setting and dramatic narration. Periodically, the chorus would enter the scene and inte-

grate Pirie's choreography into pivotal moments in the plot, accompanied by vocal and instrumental music.

"What stood out to me was the intention for the chorus to direct the audience's emotional journey throughout the show," said Gaby Canedo '25, a chorus member. "We started out as citizens of Thebes along with the audience and as the story progressed we became storytellers and left the audience on their own, with Matt [Moore] even comparing us to the fates by the very end of the performance. It was really interesting seeing at which point we transitioned to the role of the storyteller and how that was meant to influence the audience."

"The production team definitely achieved their goal of making it more than a staged reading. I enjoyed how immersive the production was in the intimate space of the recital hall and how dedicated all the actors were to bringing the audience in," said Anna Bobok '23, an audience member.

Allison Mintz '23, another audience member, said, "I never thought I would say this, but I was most affected by the space the piece took place in. My close proximity to the cast, especially the chorus, made the play feel like a very raw, personal event. The moments of chaos were especially jarring, in the best way. I was absolutely doubtful that the recital hall could function as a performance space, but as an audience member, I'm truly in awe of the production and creative teams' ability to transform an atypical theatre space."

## Living Writers

# Nnedi Okorafor comes to 'Berg

BY KEANNA PEÑA  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

On Nov. 7, award winning author Nnedi Okorafor came to Muhlenberg as a part of the Living Writers series. Okorafor is the winner of Hugo, Nebula, World Fantasy, Locus and Lodestar Awards and has written comics for Marvel, including "Black Panther: Long Live the King" and "Wakanda Forever."

The class read Okorafor's "Noor" (2021), and in collaboration with the Center of Ethics, her novel, "Binti" (2015), was selected as this year's Common Read. Okorafor is a Nigerian-American author of African-based fantasy, science fiction,

and magical realism. She coined the term "Africanfuturism," which she explains is "concerned with visions of the future, is interested in technology, leaves the earth, skews optimistic, is centered on and predominantly written by people of African descent (Black people) and it is rooted first and foremost in Africa. It's less concerned with 'what could have been' and more concerned with 'what is and can/will be.'"

When Okorafor came to campus, she had lunch with a handful of students, a rare opportunity for students within the Living Writers course. Associate Professor of English Linda Miller explained, "When we first started teaching this class, we realized right away that there

are some students who wanted to have a more hands on experience or conversation with the writers, and really talk to the writer about their professional career as a writer and ask questions that don't really come up in the Q&A, because we're focused so much on the text." During the lunch Okorafor spoke on her experience getting her first book published, what it's like writing for Marvel and her writing process.

When asked about publishing one's own book, Okorafor advised students to "find your own path. There is no one way of doing it." She continued, "don't try to enter the publishing industry when you're not ready. Take the time to own your craft, find your voice and be secure of yourself."

Okorafor talked about how when she was writing her first novel, "Zahrah the Windseeker," she struggled to find anyone to publish it because at the time, no one was writing novels set in a futuristic world that was based on Nigerian culture, while also featuring elements of fantasy. Okorafor explained, "at that time, it was just unheard of. So for multiple reasons, the fact that I was a Black woman, Nigerian-American woman, who was writing this kind of thing, I kept hearing, 'Oh, we've never seen this before. And therefore, we don't know if it will sell.'" Eventually, her book was published because "I had this Black agent who understood

SEE LIVING PAGE 7



# A-Town Records blossoms with their first musical: “Spring Awakening”

BY KEANNA PEÑA  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

This past weekend, A-Town Records (ATR), in collaboration with ‘Berg Production, showcased the Tony Award winning musical, “Spring Awakening.” A-Town Records, formed in 2022, is a student-led record label and music association that aims to connect musicians of all backgrounds to collaborate on musical projects. ATR’s production of “Spring Awakening” took place in the Event Space and all dates were completely sold-out.

“Spring Awakening” tells the story of children who don’t get the tools and the education to confront the real world, and what happens when they have to deal with it themselves. The musical centered around a multitude of heavy topics, such as suicide and sexual assault, and producer Rachelle Montilus ‘24, in collaboration with intimacy coordinator Isabel Moletierri ‘23, director Alegra Secor ‘23 and choreographer Christine Zak ‘23, worked to cover these subjects with care. Voices of Strength (VOS), was positioned just outside the Event Space for those who needed support throughout the show.

The production showcased the undeniable talent of the Muhlenberg Community. Secor made sure that the actors felt safe every step of the rehearsal process, saying that they “used different psychological techniques in order to better the actors’ experience and better handle all of the challenging themes in the show.”

Moletierri expressed that she “was really grateful to get the chance to experience what it is like to intimacy coordinate a production in a college setting, because

this is a job I am really interested in exploring post-grad.” She added, “It is so amazing that ATR was able to give so many opportunities for students to serve in roles both on and off stage they might not have been able to experience otherwise.”

Secor added, “We were told that the department didn’t want to do the show because they didn’t think that students could handle the content, which I think is fascinating because most of the content in the show, we’ve already lived through it.”

While actors sang about the “Bitch of Living,” they danced along to the music of a live pit full of student musicians. With the musical direction of Arielle Toutou ‘24 and Daisy Cunningham ‘25, the live music added an extra layer to the show.

Audience member Emma Teske ‘25 commented, “The band was incredible! Having a live band on stage adds such a cool element to any show and I think it worked so well for ‘Spring Awakening.’ The band was incredibly talented and was able to heighten everything about the show!”

Audience members thought the show was well done. Bryson Brunson ‘25 said, “It’s great to see what students can do without departmental help,” and that “the cast was so great, they really captured some great moments about the gentleness of the show.”

Cunningham commented, “I honestly had so much fun working on the show. I played guitar and piano in the pit, assistant music directed, and also did the lighting design with my brother, which seems like a lot, but I was really motivat-

ed because we all wanted the show to be the best it could be. There were certainly a lot of barriers—our original set designer and lighting designers quit with little notice and no suggestions for replacements, which is why we all had to step in. We also didn’t get as much funding from the SGA as we had hoped, and had to outsource our costumes since we had trouble borrowing from the department. Additionally, the Event Space is certainly not built for theatrical performances, so it was certainly difficult to try to transform it into that kind of an environment.”

However, ATR was able to receive some help from ‘Berg Production, and manager Jonah Adamcik ‘19 expressed that “the students did all of this. I was just here to make sure everything fell into place and to make sure the cues worked, to make sure we were able to add some lighting stuff to it. The student leadership team behind this is really what made this happen. ‘Berg Production is always happy to support art and support the arts here at Muhlenberg. We’re happy to support shows and produce shows like this. But really the story here is what the students have done on stage. And it shows—this was really a great show, and I’m hoping to do many more of them in the future.”

The Civic Theatre of Allentown also donated wireless microphones for the “Spring Awakening” cast to use.

Montilus reflected back to when she first saw a run of the show, and explained that she started tearing up, “Because I was like, oh my God, this is worth it. Being able to sit down and watch the actors do what they do best, and watch all the beautiful things that the director, the or-

chestra and choreographer have done—it’s just super fulfilling. It was very emotional.”

Actor Alec Gould ‘26, who played Ernst, expressed that performing the show “was so much fun. Being backstage was absolutely amazing. The energy was fucking electric. I had the most fun that I think I’ve ever had on stage in this production.” He added, “I’ve taken on some of the most difficult content I’ve ever had to take on onstage in this production, and I would not have traded it for the world.”

Evie Carlin ‘24, who played Wendla, added, “Working on this show has been so much fun. I’ve gotten so close with the cast and crew, and through the rehearsal process I have genuinely fallen in love with the show and the important story it tells.”

Simone Kaye ‘23 said, “It was such an exciting experience to finally perform this show—we have been rehearsing since essentially the very beginning of this semester and we have been working so hard, so to finally have it come together in front of an audience was wonderful.”

Secor highlighted that this production was an incredible feat. “It was student-produced, student-directed, and student-acted. It is a fully student-run production and you can’t do this show any other way.”

Harry Glicklin ‘26 said that his favorite part of the show was “the musical numbers. Everyone was so talented—the cast and the pit; [it was] such a fun time.” He continued, “I hope to see more shows from ATR in the future!”

## The process to bring the production to life

BY KEANNA PEÑA  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

In an interview with Rachelle Montilus ‘24, she expressed that putting on “Spring Awakening” was “the craziest experience of my life. It’s the most complex and heaviest balancing act I think I’ve ever had to do.”

Simone Kaye ‘23, who played Moritz, was disappointed in the way that the College as a whole chose not to support this project. “We repeatedly faced obstacles from organizations and individuals alike who didn’t believe in us or our vision enough to lend a helping hand, not even necessarily with money but with something as simple as a single prop. It was disappointing to have that sort of push back from people at a place like Muhlenberg, which boasts such a supportive environment for student artists.”

Preparation for “Spring Awakening” began at the end of May, when Montilus asked the Student Government Association (SGA) for \$1,400 to buy the licensing to put on a musical. Originally, ATR thought they would be putting on “Spelling Bee.” Montilus explained, “We realized that we can’t force directors to do a show they weren’t passionate about. So I went into the general assembly meeting being very transparent, saying that the show might change. They approved the money so we could buy the copyrights for whatever show we wanted.”

Treasurer of SGA Evan Lippman ‘24 explained that “when SGA first voted on this request, it was for the production of ‘25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee,’ which was for a fact stated as seen in our meeting minutes. ‘Spelling Bee,’ from my perspective as a non-theater person, is a very fun and light show. It is also a low cost show; ATR predicted that they would need around \$200-300 for other costs besides the rights to the show.”

ATR changed the show to “Spring Awakening” when Secor became the director of the show. Montilus was apprehensive at first of doing “Spring Awakening,” a show that had a lot of sensitive topics, but when she met Secor and heard their pitch on what they wanted to do with the show, Montilus was sold. However, “Spring Awakening” was going to require more funding.

When asked why ATR didn’t receive help from the theatre department, Montilus explained that it was hard to get help from the theatre department’s props master and scene shop, describing them as “very uncooperative.”

While they were able to borrow a handful of costumes, the show’s costume designer, Sarah Hansel ‘24, had to buy a lot of clothes because the theatre department did not have costumes for plus size actors or for those who are genderfluid and nonbinary.

Thus, ATR went to SGA requesting an additional \$1,500 for “Spring Awaken-

ing.” This money would have covered additional expenses regarding microphones, costumes, scenic design, props and other supplemental things.

Lippman expressed, “Many members felt that ATR blindsided SGA in this regard by putting on a show that was of much more seriousness and required much more funding that SGA was not made aware of when we voted on the rights for the show last spring.”

The “Spring Awakening” crew was deep into the rehearsal process by the time of the SGA general assembly meeting. Montilus expressed, “At the end of the day, we needed that money, and they didn’t give it to us. And so we had to do our own funding. Our director made a GoFundMe and we raised \$1,500 but there’s no reason that we as students had to do that ourselves. The infrastructure is here in that the school should fund student projects like that. We shouldn’t have to go and ask our families who are already paying thousands of dollars to send us here for more money.”

President of SGA, Ben Eber ‘23, explained, “The General Assembly meeting at which we voted on ATR’s financial requests saw historic highs in constituent turnout. ATR had two SCORE (Student Club and Organization Request for Expense) forms being voted on. The first was a \$6,000 request for Muhlapalooza, and the second was a \$1,500 request in additional funds for Spring Awakening,

totalling \$7,500 in requests from ATR. This is the most funding SGA would have ever given a club this young and is significantly more than has been allocated to any single non-permanent organization in recent years. The General Assembly voted to supply the full \$6,000 for Muhlapalooza, an event that the General Assembly is extremely excited for.”

Muhlapalooza is an upcoming event currently being planned by ATR which will showcase various musical performances for the student body,

Montilus wants the Muhlenberg community to understand that “We’re all students at the end of the day... Students should be supporting students. We’re all busting our asses, breaking our backs to do for ourselves what the institute won’t do for us. And so, the challenge is, how can [the College] step it up?”

Eber added, “For many SGA members, voting ‘no’ to the ‘Spring Awakening’ request was a difficult decision, as many representatives had friends involved in the production, but I am confident that everyone voted in a manner they thought would best suit the student body, which is commendable. If anyone would like to have a more integral role in making decisions like this, we encourage you to run for SGA in our upcoming special elections. Be the change you want to see. Congratulations to the entire cast and crew of ‘Spring Awakening’ on a job well done!”



# From the page to the stage

## *The Weekly goes live with Paige's Page*

BY ALMARAH URMAN  
STAFF WRITER

On Nov. 10, Paige Weisburg, '22, author of The Weekly advice column "Paige's Page" took to the Red Door to do a live version of her column. Students could come and ask questions at a microphone or write them down anonymously for Weisburg to answer.

"Paige's Page" was born last fall, when I wanted to get involved with The Weekly but I didn't know what I wanted to do and joked with my friends about doing an advice column. I was also really adamant at the time that I didn't want to use a pun for my name but here we are. After writing it for the past year, I joked about doing a live show and eventually talked to Cydney [Wilson, '23], who loved the idea and has been really supportive of this project since I mentioned it to her," said Weisburg.

Weisburg has been writing Paige's Page since the fall of 2021. She gives advice across various subjects, from social and relationship drama to trying new things. She's stated on multiple occasions, including the very first edition of "Paige's Page" and at the very beginning of the live show, that she may not be the most qualified to give advice on every subject she's asked about, but she's going to do it anyway, as she has opinions and she wants to share them.

"I honestly was very anxious. I didn't

actually think people were going to come. I had done a lot of advertising so I am happy that it paid off. I was worried people weren't going to feel comfortable asking questions live, and I am so glad that people did because it was so fun being able to answer these questions directly to the people that ask them. Typically when I am writing Paige's Page for the week, it's just me on my couch thinking about the same question from the Google form for like 25 minutes and then writing up my response in the best way I can—three times. So I was excited about the idea of answering on the spot, and I think the advice I gave was actually pretty good!" reflected Weisburg about the experience.

Weisburg's advice was a success, transitioning from the page to the stage with ease according to the audience reactions. People seemed to particularly enjoy it when she used her signature greeting of "Hey bestie!" for them. Those who asked live questions also often use the greeting at the beginning of their ask. The most popular types of questions were about fashion, as Weisburg is a known fashion icon at Muhlenberg, and food.

"Paige is the best gluten-free representation we could have on this campus! I had a great time and Paige created a really fun environment, but I especially loved the gluten-free restaurant answer," said Dina Maltser, '26.

Weisburg also did a great job of creating a safe and comfortable environment

for people to come forward and ask legitimate advice on things that have really been troubling them. While there was an anonymous question option, by the end of the event, questioners felt safe enough to ask serious questions. She quickly curated a relaxed dynamic with the audience.

"It was such a nice experience to come together. Because the questions that were asked are often things that we think we're being dramatic about... or things that we think nobody else is going through. But then someone asks a question that you were also thinking about, maybe it was on a topic you thought you were overreacting about. So when it's asked, there's like this silent alliance formed. I think that's really special. When I asked my question about feeling judged in the dining hall, I thought I was crazy before other people came up to me after and shared their experiences with that," reflected Jem Berney, '26.

"The room was so positive and everyone seemed so excited to be there and participate. It felt like I was just gossiping with my friends which is always fun. It really allowed me to get out of my head. I feel like when I write Paige's Page every week, I am thinking really hard about sounding smart and like I know what I'm doing, even though everyone that reads my column knows I don't... I am not a performer by any means, but I felt really comfortable saying what I wanted to say behind a mic," Weisburg explained, echoing the sentiments of the audience.



Paige Weisburg '22 answers questions live.

For Weisburg, who is graduating at the end of the semester, Paige's Page Live was a great way to wrap up a long career with The Weekly. She, during the show and after, expressed sentiments of absolutely loving her time with the newspaper and said that it is one of the things that she will miss the most about Muhlenberg.

### FROM **LIVING** PAGE 5

what I was writing and the difficulty of it. Then, she found a Black woman who was in a position of power, who understood what I was writing, and could reach her hand out and buy it right there." Okorafor used her story to emphasize how this "speaks to the need for diversity" in the publishing industry.

Later that evening was an event in collaboration with the Center of Ethics, where Assistant Professor of English and Africana Studies Emanuela Kucik, Ph.D, led a conversation with Okorafor regarding both "Noor" and "Binti." The theme of the College's common read was "Speculative Futures." The event, which took place in Miller Forum, was filled to the brim with students. Kucik asked Okorafor a range of questions, from the significance of names in her novels to Africanfuturism. Kucik commented, "It was an immense honor and privilege to be in conversation with Okorafor, and it was an absolutely incredible experience! She provided so much helpful context about how she created both 'Noor' and 'Binti,' and I found it particularly illuminating to hear her speak about how her personal experiences influenced so much of her writing process(es) for both novels. I also loved listening to her discuss how her characters 'speak' to her; it emphasized how real these characters are not only to Okorafor, but to so many people who see



Nnedi Okorafor talks about her experiences with writing fiction, specifically under the direction of Marvel.

themselves in her work."

Many students continue to find the class to be extremely insightful and eye-opening in regards to learning one's writing process. Harry Glicklin '26 expressed that "The inclusion of writers from all different genres has really helped me get

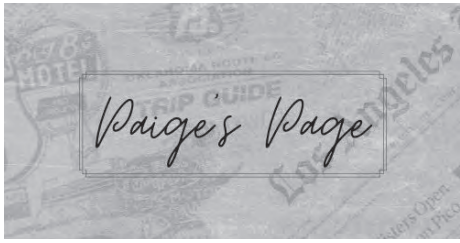
a holistic view on writing, and the many outlets that people use to express their ideas."

However, some students are still conflicted on their feelings about the class. Nico Correa '24 commented, "My experience in the class has been engaging.

I think it's cool to read a piece with the creator in mind. However, with regards to the variety of books being assigned, I am left a bit dissatisfied." Correa wished that the faculty teaching the course could choose the books that the class covered, however the authors who come to visit are the ones who choose what the class reads.

Kucik hopes that students were able to learn a lot from Okorafor. She "loved [Okorafor's] emphasis on creating art as an antidote to social issues. Much of contemporary public discourse (in the social justice realm) focuses on how to combat destruction, and I loved her perspective on the topic, which is that one way to combat destruction is by endlessly creating art that embodies what you want the world to be—art that allows us to see what the world could be and that shows us how to create an entirely new, better world."





## Paige's Page

BY PAIGE WEISBURG  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Hey besties! Welcome to this week's edition of Paige's Page! Thank you so so much to everyone who came to Paige's Page Live last week, I hope you all had as much fun as I did. It was so amazing to be able to answer questions in-person and unfiltered. If you were not able to be there, I will not lie to you, you did miss the best hour probably ever, but that's okay because we still have a couple more of these to go. I got some really fantastic questions written to me at Paige's Page Live that I did not get a chance to answer because we had so many brave people come up to the mic, but thankfully I have this space to answer some of them for you here! So let's get started!

**Q** Hi Paige, my really good friend and I told each other we like each other and it has been three weeks and we haven't gone on a first date yet and I am not feeling the spark anymore. How do I let him down easy?

Hey bestie! This is really tricky! Falling for a friend can be really amazing because

you already have an established relationship and a strong connection with each other. However, it can also make your friendship more difficult because feelings tend to do that. If you have a hard time deciphering platonic and romantic feelings, this can be really confusing and not really knowing what you want can be frustrating for everyone involved. It has been a hot second since you and your friend had that conversation. Since nothing has come of this since then, a conversation is definitely due to happen. It is so cool that you have this person that you can be direct and have open communication with. If you are certain that you don't feel anything for him anymore then just tell him. Your friendship can continue even if you aren't together. If you want to try to feel out the possibility of a relationship though, maybe you propose the three-week-late date, go, and be open to whatever you feel. And then reevaluate from there because maybe he isn't feeling it either but he is afraid to hurt you. Or maybe you both have a lovely time and your feelings reemerge. I honestly don't think there is a way to let anyone down easily; rejection hurts no matter how big and shiny the bow you put on the box it comes in is. Allow him to tell you what he may need from you following this conversation and actually listen to what he says. If he says he needs a little space, give that to him. If he wants to talk about it, then let him. That will make it all the more easy to protect your friendship.

**Q** Hey Paige! I keep going on dates with my high school ex every time I go home for a break. What do I do?

Hi bestie! You have full control of your actions so if you don't want to go on dates with them, then perhaps you should not. That being said, I understand the wonder of what could have been, or going back to something that you know works. If the "Evermore" song you have decided you want to relate to is "Tis The Damn Season" and not "Tolerate It," then that is a win, I think. If this remains a fun plot point for you and you are enjoying yourself, then continue. If not, the block button exists for a reason, and you should use it.

**Q** Hey Paige, how long should I wait for someone after they've been broken up with to not be the rebound?

Hi bestie, this might sound annoying but if any person wants to think of you as a rebound, they will. You have to be kind of okay with that if you want to pursue this person, or just not care. I personally think that trying to be with a person who just got out of a relationship is not the most fantastic idea unless you are looking for something more casual. People need time to be with themselves after getting out of a relationship. They have to process and learn who they are as a single person. Independence is really hot and sexy, and a really attractive quality in a potential partner. Waiting is hard though so if you don't want to, I very much understand. I think it also depends on who ended the relationship. If the person you are interested in ended it, then they probably allowed themselves time to heal beforehand and so they are probably more moved on than the person they broke up with. It's all relative, don't think too hard

about it, you will drive yourself crazy. All of that, I guess, to say, is who cares? Do what you want to do because you want to do it. No one else's feelings have any impact on the relationships we have with other people. Stop caring about the opinions of people that have nothing better to do with their lives.

**Q** Hi Paige! If I have a crush on campus should I run from it or pursue it? Especially if they are oblivious.

Hey bestie! I think at this point, you know what I'm going to say... tell them, or at least feel it out a little more. If you decide you want to run from it, have fun seeing them for all of eternity because the second you decide you don't want to see anyone at this school, they show up in the dining hall at the same time as you, walking to the bathroom in Ettinger, in your house, in your car, with your best friend, etc. If they are oblivious, maybe talk to a mutual friend about putting the idea in their head, or use them to gather information about their feelings about you. Also just generally, having a crush is fun even if you have no desire to let them know; creating a harmless little story about someone being in love with you is so entertaining. I love having a crush in one of my classes. It motivates me to say things that I think sound smart so that I can imagine them being like, "wow she's so fun and smart and cool." I hope you get married <3.

You can submit questions to <https://tinyurl.com/paigespagequestion>. It will also be linked in my Instagram bio— @paigeweisburg and in The Muhlenberg Weekly Instagram Linktree.

# A Jewish person's most wonderful time of year

BY BRIANNA KOVIT  
COPY EDITOR

Every year on the Friday after Thanksgiving, my hometown best friend and I welcome the budding holiday season with a drive-through Christmas lights show. We drive 30-minutes south of our Long Island suburb to enter the consistently Disneyland-like state of rainbow snowmen, bedazzled reindeer and a mystifying amount of electronic snowflakes hitting the ground. At two miles-per-hour, we always take a moment to pause for the lone Menorah in the line up.

"They remembered us!" We laugh it off.

Is it paradoxical to be a proud Jew who also happens to deeply, unequivocally love the Christmas season? For much of my childhood, and even into recent college years, my relationship with Christmas has been comically uncomplicated for a Jewish person. Growing up, I blasted "Last Christmas" by "Wham!" as if I'd been broken up with at a Christmas party when, in truth, I had never even been in a house with a Christmas tree. I relished visiting the Rockefeller Center tree—especially on Christmas Day when it was basically empty because all of the non-Jews were at home actually celebrating. I'm still excited by the idea of walking through

Bryant Park, hot chocolate in hand and watching the ice skaters. Everything I've ever loved about Christmas had nothing to do with religion and everything to do with happy people and infectious energy. I grew up loving the commercialization of Christmas. The actual holiday? I barely regarded it.

I've always loved the idea of the holidays: the happy chaos, the traditions, the family. But as I've grown up, I've realized that holidays are more imperfect than we realize as kids. The planning is stressful, the event is often tense and the aftermath is almost never worth it. But as a Jewish person during Christmas time, I could participate in the cultural joy of the holiday without the actual "religious" responsibilities of celebrating it. Some might call that... a Christmas miracle?

Who's hosting? Who's cooking? Who's sitting next to who?

Don't know. Don't care. It's my commercial holiday.

When I arrived at college, I realized that my Jewish Christmas experience wasn't entirely typical. Other Jews were not necessarily laughing off the inclusion of one Menorah in a Christmas lights show. Rather, Christmas was a frustrating season—one that triggered feelings of exclusion and sadness.

My fond take on Christmas is a privi-

leged one. Growing up in the Five Towns of Long Island, an area all-but synonymous with Jews, meant that I never felt like a religious outsider. My public high school closed for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. All my closest friends were Jewish; in fact, we once thought it was funny to do a "Secret Santa" gift exchange amongst our friend group for the irony. I purchased a Santa hat. Even now as a Muhlenberg student, I am one of many Jews here. One third of the student body is Jewish. As a historically Lutheran institution, that is hilarious.

It wasn't until studying abroad in London earlier this year (Is there a non-cliché way to say that?) that I experienced the isolation of being "the Jewish friend." Suddenly, no one else around me could relate to my ordinary cadence. The budding holiday at that time was Passover, and I remember needing to make a conscious effort to "celebrate" alone for the first time. Truth be told, all I wanted was some matzo pizza and a morning of matzo brei, but it had to be a conscious decision to bypass the confusion in my roommates' eyes and honor my own intentions. (Both were great. Sugar and strawberry jelly on matzo brei is the best part of Passover.)

So now as Christmas comes around, I'll appreciate the lights show and I'll probably go see the Rockefeller tree but I'll

enter those situations with a new claim to my own Jewish identity.

So, yes, you can be both a proud Jew and an undeterred Christmas lover. After all, it's the most wonderful time of the year.





# Erasure

BY NICO CORREA  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Sometimes I don't exist  
Sandy, malleable bits drag over me,  
Soak me up, disperse me, I could be  
nothing but a smeared blur,  
I hate to be seen, remembered,  
I wish to be forgotten, take away  
The mark I made,  
Write around me, protect your words,  
Preserve yourself.

Sometimes I am wiped from the page,  
Can't be  
Perceived, forced to act, be something  
Anything to anybody,  
Let me go, let me be  
Somebody that never happened, a thought  
That was never expressed,  
A vision that didn't need to be seen.

Sometimes I need to redraw myself,  
Resurfacing from nothing,  
Reconceptualized, redefined,  
Made by a hand without an eye,  
I emerge as doodlebob,  
Isn't that funny?  
A parody of myself,  
What else am I supposed to be?



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANN H/PEXELS



PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

# 1, 2, 3, and 4

BY KEANNA PEÑA  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

I get off the J train  
Pocket buzzing  
Mom tells me to get home  
Safely so I untuck  
My shirt pull it  
Over my hips  
I reach the corner  
Traffic light changes  
And the race  
To get home  
Unscathed  
Begins

My body tenses  
With every body I pass  
With every leer from the men  
Who sit in front of barber shops  
Restaurants bodegas  
Who blast reggaeton  
Through off-brand speakers  
And laugh with beer bottles in hand  
I wish I loved that laugh

Eyes dizzy  
1, 2, 3, and 4  
with the colors of concrete  
5, 6, 7, and 8  
I remind myself  
Of the rules  
Always keep your head down  
But always look behind you  
Walk so fast your hips won't have time to sway  
But don't walk so fast that you gain attention  
Walk so fast they can't see your mascara  
But slow enough that they can see you scowl

Behind me I hear the J train  
And I wish I could get back on  
Transfer to the L  
Get off at Bedford  
And walk those gentrified streets  
Where there aren't enough shadows  
For men to lurk  
And grab me by the shirt  
tucked into my jeans

But no.  
Feet unrelenting  
I turn onto my street  
I count  
1, 2, 3, and 4  
5, 6, 7, and 8  
And finally  
I make it to my block  
Where all the houses  
That are not houses  
Tall, pressed together  
Leave  
No room to hide  
From men who watch my curly hair  
Bounce with every step I take  
And wonder what else about me bounces

I have mastered the art of  
Turning my head  
Without turning my head  
But I see you  
I know you're watching me  
But you're too late  
I reach my front steps  
Fit the key in the lock  
Step inside my home  
Win the race  
And deadbolt the door

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor (bergweeklyoped@gmail.com) or the Editor-in-Chief (weeklyeditor@gmail.com) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.



# Kings of Bethlehem

BY DYLAN ROSENBLATT  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

On Nov. 8, 2022, the Muhlenberg men's basketball team tipped off their 2022-2023 season against the Moravian University Greyhounds. Following an extremely competitive 40 minutes of basketball, the Mules were able to pull away in the final minute and capture the victory against the Greyhounds, defeating them 77-74 in a very competitive environment. The team was led by their two upper-classmen guards, Daniel Gaines '22 and Giovanni Rubino '24, both of whom scored 23 points with efficient shooting, shooting 9/15 and 9/16 from the field, respectively.

Gaines and Rubino high-scoring numbers are no shocker, as Gaines is the fourth fastest 1,000-point scorer in school history, and in the final nine games of last season, Rubino averaged around 15 points per contest. Rubino—who was recently awarded the Centennial Conference men's basketball athlete of the week—knows that the team relies on Gaines and himself in situations where they need a basket, and overall to consistently put up high-scoring performances. He talked about why he and Gaines have been so successful on the court together, saying “playing with Dan has been great and I think our play styles complement each other really well. We've been able to be effective both on and off the ball, and playing with a player as good as Dan makes my job a lot easier.” When asked about the pressure of knowing that sometimes the team may give him the ball and



PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS AND OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION

Jayson Williams-Johnson '25 bodies defender.

ask him to find a way to score, Rubino said “as far as the pressure, I wouldn't say I feel any pressure at all. I'm lucky that my teammates and coaches trust me with the ball in key situations and I'm really just looking to make the right play in those moments. Whether that's scoring or passing, I'm just trying to make the right reads.”

Starting power forward, Tommy McGuire '23, who also had a great game, posting his second career double-double with 11 points and 11 rebounds, talked about how they were able to battle and get the win against Moravian. “We were prepared for the situation because we go over stuff like that (games coming down to the final few possessions) in practice all the time. We go over late-game situations a lot so, come game time, we are

confident we can execute to the best of our ability,” said McGuire. He also acknowledged that the Moravian crowd was pretty hectic, however, there was a good number of Muhlenberg supporters that made the trip to Moravian to watch the game in person. McGuire gave a shout-out to those supporters of the team: “We owe that victory to all the fans who made the trip to Bethlehem. Knowing they had our back behind enemy lines gave us that extra push to get the win.”

This game was Gaines' first game back following his season-ending injury that ended his time playing 11 games into the season last year. Rubino made it clear that Gaines' injury is far behind him: “I think he's done a great job coming back from a season-ending injury last year which is never easy. He's really been a leader for us

and his ability to play on and off the ball makes him so easy to play with. He is not only unselfish but extremely humble as well and I feel really confident going into games with him back.”

The team knows that despite it being great that they started the season with a win, there is still a lot more basketball to be played this season and much more to improve on. McGuire harped on what they can take away from the opener: “I think we shared the ball extremely well. We have so many players who can make plays and I am confident as the season continues, we will all settle into a groove. We need to improve defensively however if we want to compete in our conference. I am confident as we get more experience as a team, that end of the floor will come along. Even though we won our first game, we cannot get complacent and be satisfied with our initial success. It's a long season and we have to stay resilient.”

Following a victory against Susquehanna University last Saturday, Nov. 12th, the team has started the season on fire, winning their first two games. Their next game is an away matchup against Swarthmore University—the number two ranked team in the 2022 men's basketball Centennial Conference preseason poll on Nov. 22, at 7 p.m. This will also be their first conference matchup of the season. Hopefully, the Mules can go back to their families for Thanksgiving still being undefeated.

# Mules capture the Sodexo trophy

BY JOSH BOTEL  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Every year, the Muhlenberg College Mules square up against the Moravian University Greyhounds to determine the best football team in the Lehigh Valley and claim the Sodexo trophy that year. On Nov. 12 the Mules defeated Moravian in an impressive 37-10 blowout on the road.

Winning the Sodexo trophy means a lot to Nathan Milne, who is finishing up his fourth full season as Muhlenberg's head coach. “It was a nice finish to the regular season and always great to beat your rival. The game is special when you have two historic schools competing, so it just means more,” said Milne.

Agreeing with Milne, quarterback Joe Repetti '25 said, “It felt very good to capture the Sodexo Cup once again. That is something we always look forward to in this rivalry game, and we don't plan on losing the cup anytime soon.”

The MVP of the rivalry game was John Washington '23. Washington finished the game with two interceptions and returned one for a touchdown. Along with the title, Washington received a bowl-shaped trophy



PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT

Pictured L-R: John Washington '23, Quentin Ogrein '23, Owen Daddona '23, Michael Feaster '23.

phy for winning the MVP honor but credited the rest of the team for the award. “It feels good when others recognize you for your play on the field, but this was a team award. I credit them because this could have been given to anyone that played. All around great effort in all phases. Coach Milne reflected on Washington's perfor-

mance saying, “Recruiting John Washington four and a half years ago! John was the MVP of the game and created turnovers that led directly to points. His interceptions changed the momentum of the game.”

Talking about the key to his successful game, Washington said, “Just watching

film all week. Based on the formation and personal, we had a good idea of their tendencies. Coach Kory David and the rest of the staff did a great job during practice, and it was up to us to execute.” Washington was not the only one on the defensive

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# How many lives does it take?

BY DANIELLE ROBAN  
ROOKIE WRITER

**Content Note:** This article contains information surrounding suicidal ideation. If you are experiencing suicidal thoughts please seek help through on-campus resources such as the counseling center at 484-664-3178. For emergencies call 988.

This year alone the NCAA lost four collegiate athletes from suicide. The NCAA found that student-athletes are highly susceptible to depression due to the stressors of overtraining, injury, pressure to perform, lack of free time and/or stress from schoolwork. Approximately 30 percent of female collegiate athletes and 25 percent of male collegiate athletes report having anxiety. Collegiate athletes are twice as likely as retired collegiate athletes to struggle with depression. This isn't only a trend we see in college athletes, 35 percent of elite/professional athletes report suffering from anxiety, depression, burnout and/or disordered eating and only 10 percent of collegiate athletes with known mental health conditions seek help.

On Nov. 6, Head in the Game held an open conversation between coaches and student-athletes to discuss mental health. The event created a safe space for athletes to talk with their coaches on how to facilitate conversations about mental health and athletic performance. Coaches also got the opportunity to ask the athletes questions.

The event aimed to help alleviate the

concerns that both student-athletes and coaches may have about these conversations. "I didn't feel comfortable talking to my coach until my junior year," said Sara Fallon '23. Fallon mentioned how vital it is to tell younger players on the team that it is okay to go to their coach about mental health issues or any problems an athlete is facing on or off the field.

There were 15 coaches and athletic trainers in attendance at the event. There was an honest conversation between athletes and coaches about what they can each do better to understand each other in terms of mental health. Chiming in on the discussion, women's head soccer coach Dave Weitzman added, "We are learning as we go, some of that stuff was taboo back then, we are all trying to learn and develop ourselves as coaches"

"If a student-athlete goes to a coach, I haven't seen any coach that wasn't willing to listen. Winning and losing aside, relationships mean more to me with my athletes... At the end of the day, coaches want to see you succeed in life" commented men's basketball coach, Kevin Hopkins."

Athletes that attended the conversation found it reassuring to hear their coaches say that the relationships between coaches and players matters more than the athletes are aware of. "This conversation was one that flowed relatively smoothly thanks to the willingness of coaches to learn and the ability for student-athletes to educate others about how mental health should be approached in an athlete-coach relationship" said Kaitlyn Buurman '25, mental health intern

for the athletic department, elite first baseman of the Muhlenberg softball team and member of the Head In The Game executive board.

Rarely do coaches and athletes make the space to have this conversation because athletes see their coach as an authority figure, rather than a human being. Coaches mentioned that a constant thing they are thinking about is the fact that their athletes think their self worth is based on whether the coaches choose to play them or not. "I am the good guy until I have to make a lineup" says softball coach, Sarah Leavenworth. Until athletes create those personal relationships with their coaches, coaches aren't really seen as people that their athletes can go to for support.

A major consensus was found between the athletes who attended the conversation—they will typically go to friends and family first about mental health rather than their coaches. After this conversation, coaches are hoping to see a shift in that.

"The most satisfying part of the job is not the wins and losses, it's creating relationships with my athletes," said track and field coach Brad Hackett.

Athletes reiterated to their coaches that they will not always be at 100 percent every day and made it known that even though a sport can help us get away from other stressors like school or work, it can be a stressor in itself. "Giving 100 percent of that 30 percent," Buurman said. This means that if you feel 30 percent yourself, give all that 30 percent in practice.

"Progression in mental health acknowledgment will minimize the stigma of talking about vulnerability when it comes to being a student-athlete, and having coaches become part of this active conversation is something so special," shared Buurman.

The next Head in the Game event is a conversation with parents which will be held on Sunday, Nov. 20th, at 7 p.m.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DANIELLE ROBAN

Student-athletes attending a Head In The Game meeting.

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side of the ball with a successful game. Matt Papa '24 led the team in tackles with six. Dominic Visintin '22, James McGettigan '22 and Quentin Ogren '22 all had a sack in this game, with Visintin also picking up an interception. "Our defense was very aggressive and created turnovers in a big game," said Coach Milne. The defense was big in this game, with only giving up ten points in this game and only three points in the first three quarters.

The offense also had an impressive game, led by quarterback Repetti. Repetti was able to throw for 242 yards and two touchdowns while adding 25 yards and one touchdown on the ground. "The key to our game against Moravian was sticking together through some rougher patches of the game and trusting each other to execute assignments. Once we settled in, the pieces fell into place," said Repetti. Another standout performer on the offensive end was Michael Feaster '23 who with seven catches, 109 yards and a touchdown. Ethan Brader '23 led the game in rushing with 76 yards. The offense, according to Coach Milne, was up and down. The offense really stuck out in the first and fourth quarter when they scored two touchdowns in each of those quarters.

With the win, the Mules were able to finish with a 6-4 record overall with a 6-3 record in conference, which is good enough to qualify for the Centennial-

MAC Bowl. This is the 18th time in the last 22 seasons that the Mules have been able to play a postseason game. "I'm excited to spend another week with our team. We've been through a lot on and off the field this season. We have a great group of seniors who I have so much fun with each day at practice. They work really hard, they are great ambassadors for Muhlenberg College, and to have more time with them is the best part of this week," said Coach Milne. "Going into the final game this season, we just want to send the fifth-year guys and the seniors who aren't coming back for a fifth year out the right way. Those guys have put a ton into this program, and they deserve to end their careers with a win for the last time wearing the Muhlenberg uniform," said Repetti. The main goal in this game is to get one more win for the seniors. Regardless of the outcome, with this game being a bowl game there won't be another opportunity for the Mules to take the field this season regardless of the outcome. "Time flies when you're having fun, and I wouldn't want to change my last ride with this group of men. My parents just told me to have fun and take it all in this week during practice, so I will do just that," said Washington, who is going into the final game of his career.

The Mules will take the field for the final time this season at Lebanon Valley College in the Centennial-MAC Bowl game on Saturday, Nov. 19th.

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# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## Letters home: a history of 'Berg sports

BY MATTHEW BAKER-GRUNZA  
SPORTS EDITOR

With the school's recent rallying around the men's soccer team after a record breaking season, and the men's and women's basketball teams beginning their seasons, The Weekly is taking a moment to look back at what sports means to the Muhlenberg community. Not now, but during World War II.

On Sept. 25, 1941, Jack Blair '38 wrote one of the first letters archived in the Trexler Library Special Collection from World War II. Blair had recently started basic training as a paratrooper, an experience that in later letters he would detail as a grueling process that included crawling through animal feces to simulate the smell of casualties on the battlefield. Blair, an exceptional athlete in his time, was best known for his contributions in the win against Vince Lombardi and the Fordham Rams, reached out to his teammate and friend Charles L. Garrettson '39. Since graduation Garrettson had continued to work at the College, continuing his commitment to his peers that he had displayed as a leader in football and basketball as well as president of ATO. Blair could not foresee his approaching deployment to the pacific front writing that he "Will try to arrange to get up and see Muhlenberg play some-time this fall. Am playing professional ball on Sundays and am making almost as much money for an hour's work of football than I do in the army for one whole month!" For Blair, Muhlenberg and football were two parts of his life that provided stability in a country that was on the brink of entering another world war, with him on the front lines.

Once deployed, Blair wrote to the Fister about the Muhlenberg alumni he ran into on the front lines on Nov. 10, 1942. As he met with them he would reminisce on his days in Berks hall, now East, saying "[he and William Laing] wished our other roommates were with us—Eagle ['39] & Farrell ['39]."

In the years to come many Muhlenberg soldiers would continue to look to reconnect with the sports that had filled their college days. One Muhlenberg staff member was essential to keeping the red doors open for the men fighting abroad. Gordon Fister, the director of public relations, wrote weekly about campus events including the scores and success



PHOTO COURTESY OF TREXLER LIBRARY

1946 NIT semifinalist team.

of the Muhlenberg football and basketball teams.

Wilmer Cressman '42, in his time at 'Berg, was an editor for The Muhlenberg Weekly and was praised for his exemplary communication skills. Once deployed to the navy as a Lieutenant, Cressman was elected as one of the key writers in the alumni magazine that was sent out to the troops.

After graduation Cressman had moved to Notre Dame, IN to train as an apprentice shipman before leaving for the navy. On Oct. 12, 1942 he wrote to inform John Wagner the Alumni Secretary, of his new address adding that "It is a grand place, though if you've never seen this campus and all of us are admitted to home football games free—that's how we saw Stanford-Notre Dame last Saturday. But it was a disappointing game—I've seen a lot of Berg games better played. And I've noticed our boys are really playing ball this season if that Gettysburg score is any indication."

Indeed, the Gettysburg game had been a triumphant demonstration of the Mules resolution with "A spine-tingling 50-yard pass play in the final period brought victory over a favored Gettysburg eleven the following week-end," as described by the 1943 edition of The Muhlenberg Ciarla. Over the course of the next few years Cressman would continue to write letters about his prized Mules. On Sept. 11, 1943, the Mules faced off with Yale University's Bulldogs in their first game of the season, suffering a 13-6 loss. Nonetheless Cressman held out hope, writing a week later

that "The news of Berg's first football game with Yale was good reading, even though it wasn't a victory. Sounded like a good game, and even the pre-write made the radio and newspapers around here. I'd like a schedule so that if luck is with me I can perhaps get back for a home game." Still, he held out hope that he could return home to the game and campus he loved. Even as the years at sea passed by and Muhlenberg football sank deeper into their slump Cressman wrote home on Oct. 10 1944 "It's a fighting team, planting right down to the very last minute of the game and that's something we can be proud of regardless of the score,".

In the winters, Muhlenberg soldiers turned their attention to basketball, just as we are still doing 80 years later. The 1940's saw the rise of exceptional play in Memorial Hall as teams were led by Doggie Julian. Under Julian, the Muhlenberg basketball program would set three all-time records for most wins in a season and produce a win percentage of .640 from 1936-1945. For the boys on the front lines every drive to the basket and pass was detailed in their alumni letters. On Dec. 13, 1944, Fister reached out to Warren Himmelberger '43 to inform him of the Basketball team's recent success, "I suppose you have heard of the great record the basketball team is making. We won our fifth straight on Saturday when we ran Lehigh [University] all around Rockne Hall, even with the bench cleaned. Of course, we don't expect the boys to win every game, but from the

looks of things, they'll come through with a record 66 which all of us can be proud. That's the kind of news we like to pass on to you fellows because it gives you something else to stick your chest out about." The Weekly reported that "An unusually weak Lehigh University basketball team made it easy for Muhlenberg's quintet to register the fifth win of the season last Saturday night at Rockne Hall, 67-25."

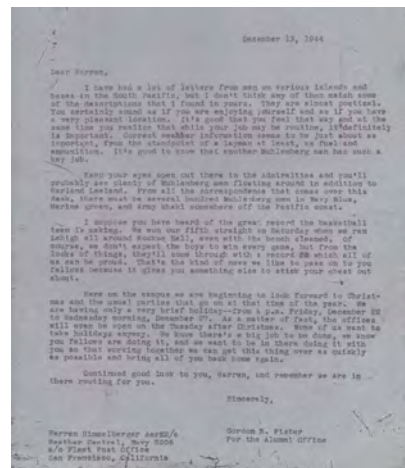


PHOTO COURTESY OF TREXLER LIBRARY

Letter from Gordon Fister to Warren Himmelberger '43

Then on Feb. 4, 1945, Himmelberger wrote to Fister about his high aspirations for the basketball team, "Naturally I'm following the basketball scores. I was afraid of those Owls, but perhaps if Baldwin gets back into shape, we shall have a chance at a Garden invitation -- which is the important thing anyway." An invitation that may seem foreign to current Muhlenberg fans, but at the time was on the minds of many Mules across the world. The Garden Invitation was the NCAA competition of the time when eight elite schools would go head to head in Madison Square Garden for the National Championship. From 1944-1946 Muhlenberg made 3 appearances progressing as far as the semifinals in 1946 with a win against the Syracuse Orange.

After receiving a letter detailing Himmelbergers gratitude for Fister's constant support, wrote in response, "Your letter was very kind and those words of praise I'll modestly admit struck a warm spot. In this busy life everybody leads, I think too many of us are prone to forget to slap a fellow on the back every now and then. Most of us will work without the pat but perhaps with a pat we work just a little bit harder."

Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Nov. 17 - Nov. 23

**Wrestling**  
**MUHLENBERG**  
vs  
**CAMDEN COUNTY**  
Sat, Nov. 19 @ 10:00 a.m.  
Deitrich Field House

**Football**  
**MUHLENBERG**  
vs  
**LEBANON VALLEY**  
Sat, Nov. 19 @ 12:00 p.m.  
Annville, Pa.

**Women's Basketball**  
**MUHLENBERG**  
vs  
**BRYN MAWR**  
Tues, Nov. 22 @ 7:00 a.m.  
Bryn Mawr, Pa.

**Men's Basketball**  
**MUHLENBERG**  
vs  
**SWARTHMORE**  
Tues, Nov. 22 @ 7:30 p.m.  
Swarthmore, Pa.





THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2022  
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### NEWS

“Hope, Opportunity and Despair” lecture on sustainability.



read more on page 1

### ARTS & CULTURE

Jakeim Hart’s ‘16 unexpected journey to Broadway.



read more on page 5

### OP/ED

Brianna Kovit ‘23 and Paige Weisburg ‘23 reflect on their time with The Weekly.



read more on page 8

### SPORTS

Athletics solving enrollment?



read more on page 11

## The eight dollar question

### *All the rage about the minimum wage!*

BY CYDNEY WILSON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Student wages have long been a topic of conversation for Muhlenberg students. In November of 2021, Ava Duskic ‘23 published an op-ed in The Weekly entitled “Let’s add some green to Muhlenberg’s colors.” She stated, “I am grateful for the ability to have a job and continue my schoolwork, but for being invaluable members of the Muhlenberg community, we are worth more than three chicken tenders and a bag of chips.” Since the publication of Duskic’s piece, Muhlenberg’s minimum student wage of \$8/hour has not changed.

With the exception of Cedar Crest College, Muhlenberg’s minimum student wage is the lowest of its competitor institutions in the Lehigh Valley. These institutions, namely Lehigh University, Lafayette College, DeSales University and Moravian University, have minimum wages ranging from \$8.25-9.25/hour, with students being paid up to \$12 for some positions.

Lafayette, Lehigh and DeSales have all raised their minimum wages in the past year. Muhlenberg’s wage, however, has been stagnant since the pre-pandemic world (at least 2019).

Muhlenberg’s wage of \$8/hour is 75 cents over the federal



Students working at the Seegers Union Information Desk.

minimum wage/Pennsylvania’s minimum wage, both of which currently sit at \$7.25/hour. Still, student wages are abysmally low. According to a living wage calculator developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the poverty wage for those living in the Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton area is \$6.19/hour, while the living wage is \$16.71/hour. Thus, Muhlenberg students are paid significantly closer to the poverty wage than the living wage.

Meg Ryan, vice president for enrollment management, and Greg Mitton, director of financial aid, responded to this, saying “to truly compare our campus wages to these statistics I be-

lieve you would have to include the robust financial aid offered to our students as well.”

However, in the instance where financial aid does provide work study for a student, work study is still frequently insufficient to provide for students outside of their on-campus needs. Tony Jack, Ph.D., a Harvard sociologist who received an honorary degree from Muhlenberg, spoke on campus in 2019 about the barriers students face despite receiving enough financial aid to afford college tuition. He pointed out that even schools with no-loan financial aid policies fail to acknowledge that a student might have tuition covered but still struggle to pay for

food, trips home during breaks and other expenses incurred at college.

Claire Spenard ‘23 explains that the low minimum wage is “why I work for Sodexo at the dining hall on top of my work study job. I need to make money and work study doesn’t cut it.” Work study positions are included in a student’s financial aid offer, and delineate an amount of money that a student can make through specific on-campus jobs.

James Wynne ‘23 holds a work study position in the history department. Wynne explains that as part of the work study pro-

SEE **WAGES** PAGE 4

## SGA welcomes new representatives

BY SAMANTHA TEMPKIN  
STAFF WRITER

The Student Government Association (SGA) conducted a special election to fill five vacant representative positions for next semester. Representatives serve as a voice for the student body and are expected to address the concerns of their peers and implement changes accordingly. Eight candidates ran for representative office and were invited

to speak at the SGA General Assembly meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 30, where they suggested improvements that they would be interested in facilitating if nominated to the position. Several candidates mentioned similar areas for improvement, highlighting some general feedback students have on how Muhlenberg can be made the best that it can be. The candidates included Vish Dsouza ‘26, Nya Johnson ‘23, Matthew Klinger ‘24, Mar-

SEE **SGA** PAGE 4

## The future of sustainability

BY SINHAYANA SRINIVASAN  
STAFF WRITER

On Tuesday, Nov. 29, Ramu Damodaran visited Muhlenberg to give a talk about the future of sustainability in the United Nations. Titled “Hope, Opportunity and Despair: Speculating The Future of United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals,” the presentation took place in the Great Room at 7 p.m. There was a big turnout, with the crowd ranging from students to

professors.

Damodaran began as a journalist in television, radio and print. Before his work at the United Nations, he was the executive assistant to the Prime Minister of India, and was in the Ministries External Affairs, Home Affairs, Defense, Planning and Human Resource Development.

Most recently, Damodaran worked in the United Nations’ department of global commu-

SEE **SUSTAINABILITY** PAGE 3



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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We request that advertising material be submitted by the Monday preceding publication at 5 p.m. If materials have not been received at that time, the advertisement will not run and the advertiser is still responsible for 100% payment. We reserve the right to decline any advertisement that is misleading, inaccurate, fraudulent, or deemed generally unacceptable. This determination will be made by the Business Staff in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief. The Muhlenberg Weekly maintains a distinction between its news & editorial content and advertising. As such, advertisements will not be accepted if they imitate the general style of The Weekly, intentionally or unintentionally. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: headlines, bylines, fonts, and column-arrangements. In order to make this distinction, The Weekly also reserves the right to include the word "advertisement" on any advertisement that is deemed too native.

# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

11/14/2022

Off Campus Location: Point of information report regarding previous fraud report.

11/15/2022

Leh Street: Report of fire alarm from water leak, Plant Operations notified to repair, system silenced and reset.

The Village: Report of fire alarm from cleaning shower, system silenced and reset.

Off Campus Location: Report of fraud, Allentown Police Department also notified, investigation to continue.

N. 23rd Street (4000 BLK): Report of keys locked in vehicle, Campus Safety successfully retrieved keys. CFA North: Report to jump start vehicle, Campus Safety Officer successfully started vehicle.

11/18/2022

Chew Street: Bias report, individuals identified and spoken to, investigation to continue.

11/19/2022

ATO/Hillcrest Lot: Report to check the welfare of a student, contact made, individuals identified and spoken to, no further incident. 23rd/Gordon Street: Report to jump start vehicle, Campus Safety Officers could not start vehicle. Haas College Center: Report of alarm from panic alarm, building checked, nothing could be noted.

11/20/2022

Martin Luther Lot: Report of found key, owner later claimed item.

N. 22nd Street: Report of found key fob, owner later claimed item.

11/22/2022

Prosser Hall: Report of alcohol violation, individuals spoken to, student transported to hospital by Campus Safety Officer.

Prosser Hall: Report of marijuana odor, individual identified and spoken to.

M.I.L.E. House: Report of fire alarm from burning candle, system silenced and reset.

Walz Hall: Report of fire safety violation, covered smoke detector, bag removed from detector.

South Hall: Report of fire safety violation, covered smoke detector, bag removed from detector.

Taylor Hall (Kathryn): Report of drug paraphernalia, items brought to Campus Safety and placed in evidence locker.

Walz Hall: Report of drug paraphernalia, items brought to Campus Safety and placed in evidence locker.

**SEEGER'S**  
after  
dark

## Late Night Studying?

the GQ will be open until 2 am

**\*Sunday, Dec 11**

**\*Monday, Dec 12**

**\*Tuesday, Dec 13**



\*The GQ will be open Sunday evening into Monday morning,  
Monday evening into Tuesday morning and Tuesday evening into Wednesday morning.



# AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: How SCOTUS affirmative action cases could impact Muhlenberg

BY KATHERINE CONLON  
CO-NEWS EDITOR

**AFFIRMATIVE ACTION** is defined by Dictionary.com as “the encouragement of increased representation of women and minority-group members, especially in employment.” Historically, this term has been heavily associated with institutions of higher education. Beginning in the 1960s, certain schools started to consider race as a factor in their admissions processes. Initially, race-based quotas were utilized for collegiate-level integration efforts. While this was struck down in the 1978 landmark ruling *California v. Bakke* (the original Supreme Court case on affirmative action), the general concept of affirmative action allowing race to be an element of decisions regarding enrollment was upheld.

Assistant Professor of Political Science Ross Dardani, Ph.D., concentrates his scholarship on the U.S. Supreme Court’s influence. Dardani outlined how the current form of affirmative action was essentially constructed by one man: Justice Lewis Powell. According to Dardani, Powell was the swing vote on the Court at the time and while he did not agree with the racial quota system, Powell thought to model affirmative action after Harvard University’s admissions program (the school where he received his Master of Laws degree). Dardani outlined Powell’s stance saying, “the only justification that an institution in higher education can rely on like a law school or med school, college or university, has to be diversity...You definitely can’t use quotas but with this more limited type of affirmative action that is going to be allowed, you have to route it in a diversity interest.”

Thus, affirmative action in its current form was born. Institutions had to prove that race as a factor would only be utilized for diversity’s sake in order to “have people with different backgrounds and experiences and different races... [as] the only way you can really produce newer forms of knowledge and get at the truth

and have progress,” stated Dardani. The idea of diversity-centric, holistic affirmative action originated in apartheid South Africa in an attempt to justify university integration, according to Dardani.

Now, in 2022, with the conservatives holding a supermajority in the Court (6-3), these justices feel emboldened to overturn decisions that have held precedents for decades. This was evident in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* this past June in which SCOTUS overturned *Roe v. Wade*, which granted Americans the right to have an abortion. Dardani speculated whether this phenomenon could extend to other long-held rights saying, “[there] are legitimate concerns to be worried about same sex marriage, to be worried about sexual autonomy and even potentially the right to privacy.”

Two affirmative action cases have been argued in the Court in late October and a decision is expected on them in June 2023. The lawsuits were filed by Students for Fair Admissions, an organization that legally represents students who believe that their race prevented them from being accepted into a college or university, against both University of North Carolina (UNC) and Harvard University. UNC is a public institution, while Harvard is a private university. Thus, both cases were argued on a different basis. The Fourteenth Amendment and Equal Protection Clause are being used to say that public colleges are not providing students with equal opportunity. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is more relevant to private universities, with the prosecution arguing that the defense is breaking the law by discriminating against students on the basis of race. Muhlenberg College, as a private institution, is presented with legal challenges to its current admissions process, if the Court rules in Students for Fair Admissions’ favor, which Dardani believes they inevitably will.

The College’s Vice President for Enrollment Management, Meg Ryan, set straight some misconceptions about holistic admissions in general, and Muhlen-

berg’s admissions process, specifically, saying, “In listening to the arguments, it is clear to me that there is a general lack of understanding of what holistic admissions actually means. Muhlenberg practices holistic admissions. There is no one part of an application that means a student is automatically accepted or denied. There is a perception that admissions offices hold two application files next to each other and say ‘which of these two students do we accept?’ That is not how holistic admissions works because no two students have the same experience.”

President Kathleen Haring, Ph.D, furthered this point noting, “Race and ethnicity are part of a person’s whole story, and to truly practice holistic admissions, we consider race when an applicant chooses to include that as part of their application.”

As of now, Muhlenberg’s administration is unsure as to how this likely change will affect their specific admissions program. Chief Diversity Officer Brooke Vick, Ph.D., noted that “it is difficult to say specifically what may change in terms of our approaches to recruiting a diverse student population to Muhlenberg. What I can say, however, is the SCOTUS decision will not change our commitment to building a diverse study body, to welcoming and equitably supporting students from underrepresented backgrounds.”

Ryan described how Muhlenberg will respond to this possible change saying, “Muhlenberg will continue to practice holistic admissions but this may be one piece of data that is no longer included. We already have partnerships with Community-Based Organizations in Philadelphia, Chicago, New York, New Jersey and Florida among others. We intentionally reach out and recruit in high schools that serve large populations of students of color.” Additionally, Ryan addressed Muhlenberg’s dedication to building a diverse community saying, “what [the ruling] won’t change is the care and commitment to diversity that exists in the admissions profession and specifically, here at Muhlenberg.”

A “colorblind” Constitution is the narrative that some of the Court’s justices push when cases regarding race arise. According to those that espouse this belief, race should never hold any legal weight. Dardani commented on this belief saying, “any type of affirmative action policy, even if it is just a holistic approach where you’re factoring in race as one factor among many, for someone who adopts a colorblind approach to the Constitution, any type of factoring in of race is always going to be unconstitutional.”

This belief is justified by the Fourteenth Amendment which notes that citizens cannot be denied “equal protection of the laws.” However, to assume that the Fourteenth Amendment, a byproduct of the Civil War, promotes a “colorblind” narrative is patently inaccurate. In his conversation with The Weekly, Dardani mentioned a quote from Chief Justice John Roberts in which he stated that “The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race.” This quote exemplifies the conservative justices’ tendency to simplify complex issues by ignoring deeply rooted racist histories. The reality is, the United States’ ties with enslavement and white supremacy are still, to this day, impacting the lives of Black Americans. Additionally, the Constitution was infused with racist (not “colorblind”) elements from its creation, with the Three-fifths Clause counting enslaved Black people as three-fifths of a person, compared to one whole white person. If SCOTUS is unable to grapple with these inherent historical inequities that require systems like affirmative action for some semblance of justice, then the next several decades of a conservative majority will inevitably lead to the rolling back of progressive measures.

## FROM SUSTAINABILITY PAGE 1

nications and oversees the relationships it has with the international community. He is also the chief editor of the United Nations Chronicle and the first chief of the United Nations academic impact. Starting in 2011, Damodaran became the secretary of the United Nations’ General Assembly’s Committee on Information. Damodaran officially retired in May of 2021 but still serves on the leadership council of the sustainable development network and works as Deputy Permanent Observer of the Intergovernmental University for

Peace to the United Nations.

The lecture mainly focused on the future of sustainable development goals (SDG) in the United Nations. Damodaran talked about the different factors that destabilized the world and how the United Nations as well as citizens can

help change them. Damodaran discussed the seventeen goals of the SDG, including “no poverty, zero hunger, gender equality, and clean water and sanitation.” He went over the step-by-step goals of the United Nations, especially related to its department of global communication. He discussed the many miscommunications with international relationships as it pertains to the United Nations. He also introduced the concept of using Artificial Intelligence in the United Nations, and how we should use every resource available to work towards a more sustainable future. Following the use of AI, he has a specific focus on developing global cybersecurity to protect people and organizations from organized cyber attacks.

William Moody ‘23 commented on the talk, saying, “I really enjoyed being in attendance to hear about the progress that the UN has made on both sustainability and sustainable development after the

passing of the Millennium Goals (the goals the UN issued prior to the SDG). It was an amazing experience to hear from someone who has had so much experience in diplomacy in both India’s civil service as well as a representative to the UN. Hearing hands-on accounts from him about how the UN is moving towards completeness in the SDGs and how the SDGs were created was amazing to hear.”

Damodaran went on to discuss topics such as climate change, equal opportunity and education across the world. He spoke about the substantial progress made as an international community over the last century.

Damodaran made strong claims on how public opinion is shaped through media and the consumer. The United Nations’ core mission is to keep countries from fighting each other, and this is extremely important right now, when stakes are high with our current world problems.

Joseph Blumofe ‘26 shared his sentiment, saying, “To be honest, it didn’t really present a plan of action. It more so just demonstrated what their goals were and what they thought those goals were gonna do. He was a great speaker but I feel the talk could have been better.”

Another student, Sophie Tomov ‘26, stated, “I thought it was very humorous and he obviously knew what he was talking about and inserted a lot of jokes to keep the crowd engaged... It’s important for students to know what to do to keep a sustainable world. And I thought it was a very important talk to have and the speaker was amazing.”

Damodaran finished his lecture by discussing the United Nations’ “dare to know” attitude in terms of the unknown future of world peace, technology and health.



FROM **WAGES** PAGE 1

gram, there is a cap of what he is able to make. This total is \$1800/year, or \$900/semester. Wynne says, “I have never made that \$900 once... Based on the hourly rate, I mean, it’s just simple math, I would have to work so many hours during the week. And as a full time student, it’s really difficult to do that.”

In addition to his work study position, Wynne works at Syb’s West End Deli. He shares that he works these two positions “just to make ends meet as a financially independent student. A lot of people have other forms of funds that they can rely on. But the jobs that I have are my main source of income. And so it’s really difficult to be able to balance everything financially when the wages are so low. So I think it would just be a form of raising the general quality of life for a lot of students who really depend on these wages.”

Annaliese Collins ‘23 adds, “A lot of us need our on campus jobs to support us, especially if we are paying our own tuition.” While financial aid offers are based on the income of a student’s entire family, these packages neglect to account for students who are self-sufficient or whose families will not be helping them with their tuition bill.

The College justifies the \$8/hour work study rate by stating that they do not have enough federal funds to increase wages. Ryan and Mitton explain, “The budget for student pay is funded by both federal dollars and Muhlenberg funds. We request additional funding for work study every year but even with the recent economic changes, our federal funds have not been increased... We have approximately 300 students on campus receiving federal work study funds, at just six hours per week during the academic year those students would exhaust the federal work study budget.”

Meanwhile, Muhlenberg is in the midst of a fundraising campaign with a \$111,000,000 goal. To date, the campaign has raised \$85,100,000. This begs the question: can any of this money be allocated to student wages?

Rebekkah Brown ‘99, vice president for advancement, explained that the Bound-

less Campaign is broken up into a variety of different priorities, one of which is the allocation of \$30 million to The Muhlenberg Fund, and another of which is \$35 million to financial aid.

She says, “I think just overall that between both the Muhlenberg Fund and the financial aid fundraising, both are supporting student wages and student experiences holistically at the College.”

While Brown says that Boundless money can, in theory, be used to increase student wages, students are still waiting to see whether the outcome of this multi-year fundraising campaign will result in an increase in their paychecks.

Ryan and Mitton add, “Our office is reviewing data and as we consider changes to pay rates, we also have to consider budget, and how having fewer student work hours may impact the student experience, like shorter operating hours or fewer support services by departments or offices that rely on student employees.”

Ryan and Mitton acknowledge the essential work done by students on campus to keep the institution running, and state that the student experience may be detrimentally impacted by the loss of any of these positions. Students, however, feel unfairly compensated given the level of importance of the work they do on campus.

Maya Rabinowitz ‘24 works in the Office of Admissions (a non-work study position) and says, “Tour guides are a pivotal part of prospective students’ experiences, and tours are what keep students enrolling (and paying!). Tour guides get endless emails and thank you notes saying our tours were the reason the student attended the school, yet tour guides get \$8 an hour for this essential work. Tour guides hold the school’s reputation in our hands and the pay we receive for it is not at all representative of the importance.”

Harry Shmerler is a junior at Lehigh University, and as a tour guide makes \$10/hour. This rate is 20 percent higher than the pay of Muhlenberg tour guides. Shmerler still feels that the rate is, “Pretty low... I think that they could pay out more to the guides and fellows because realistically if we convince one kid to come here that’s approx[imately] \$250k over the

next 4 years, so \$10/hour seems a little unfair.”

Even outside of work study, most campus jobs, including those in admissions, still pay just \$8/hour, which is completely unrelated to funds allotted for federal work study.

Hannah Verdun ‘24 says, “The wages provided for students on campus are unsustainable. Especially when considering how it’s impossible to uphold the cost of living as a student at Muhlenberg when the only source of income for students throughout the semester is \$8 per hour, often with limited hours... When folks are working in positions that work to maintain the function of campus, often with offices that are advertised (box office, library, writing center, tutoring), it’s worth discussing how little students are able to make financially.”

Many other institutions in the Lehigh Valley have tiered systems, where students are paid more for work that requires higher skill levels.

Carolyn Woodward, associate director of financial aid at DeSales University, shares, “we have 3 main wage rates based on experience and the position—\$9.25, \$9.40, and \$9.60.” Lehigh and Lafayette both have detailed charts available on their website, which explain their wage rates. Lafayette’s range from \$8.25 to \$9.01 and up, while Lehigh’s range from \$9.00-\$12.00.

Ryan and Mitton state that Muhlenberg does have this system, however, there is no easily accessible information about it on Muhlenberg’s website. They say, “We do have a tiered system. While the majority of campus jobs do share the same rate, there are specialized jobs on campus that require additional skills or training. We are working to review our current data and looking for ways we could provide clarity to the campus community on clear definitions of those different tiers.”

Sarah Coffel ‘21 worked in student affairs and in the office of admissions during her time as a student. She says, “I think the standard \$8/hour wage campus jobs paid isn’t fair. At the retail job I worked during my junior year my wage was \$10/hour. Muhlenberg has students coming

from various socioeconomic backgrounds and those should be factored into the wages paid to student workers. For students who had to take out loans or receive a larger amount of financial aid, a campus job allows them to pay for additional things that fall outside of tuition or room & board. For some students \$8/hour is simply not enough.”

Ryan and Mitton acknowledge the need for students to seek employment off campus, saying, “We understand that some students may choose to hold off-campus jobs for higher hourly rates but campus-based work study jobs are about more than just the paycheck. Work study jobs often allow students to work shorter shifts than many local businesses which could mean that students can squeeze in a shift between classes. Campus supervisors understand that you are a student and may need to adjust your schedule due to your coursework, exams or take a semester off to study abroad. Most importantly, campus jobs allow for professional development within the Muhlenberg community—supervisors are often faculty or staff who also serve as mentors to students, write recommendations for graduate schools and offer a reference during a job interview process. Students who start in one campus job may hold leadership positions within that organization later, some find their profession while others gain valuable real-world work experience that builds their resume.”

There’s no doubting the indispensable value that comes with many on-campus work positions, as Ryan and Mitton iterate. However, this leaves two final questions: Why shouldn’t Muhlenberg students be allowed to benefit from the pros of work study and other campus jobs, while also being fairly compensated for the essential work they do? And, to echo Duskic, isn’t a student’s time worth more than three chicken tenders and a bag of chips?

FROM **SGA** PAGE 1

gery Leit ‘24, Emmy Lin ‘26, Sabeen Safi ‘26, Joey Wolf ‘25 and Grace Zarrilli ‘26.

“As part of SGA, I want to be the voice for those unheard people and become an agent of change for them, so that we together can build an inclusive community where more people can share the feeling of being expressed and of being more valued and empowered,” said Dsouza, who called attention to the subject of inclusivity that many candidates focused in on. Candidates also offered concrete ideas for programs the SGA could facilitate to promote inclusivity. This included Wolf’s suggestion to post all religious holidays on the academic calendar so clubs can alter scheduling for all to participate. Zarrilli’s hope that SGA will continue planning events that represent and amplify the voices of distinct cultures and Klinger’s wish to counter polarization by creating more spaces for students to engage in dialogue with one another

and learn about different perspectives. Leit, who served as a representative last spring before going abroad, promised the continuation of the period pilot program in Seegers Union that provides students with menstrual care products. Johnson stated, “I also saw an opportunity to have more representation of different people’s backgrounds and minorities within the SGA because it’s important to be able to have a holistic experience of what it’s like to be at Muhlenberg and having more people of color involved in those kinds of areas is really important to me,” suggesting that the need for both inclusivity and diversity inspired some candidates to be a voice for everyone on campus.

Two topics also heavily touched upon during this semester’s special election included aiding students with mental health and stress, as well as involving the Muhlenberg community with the inner workings of SGA with reforms such as increased social media presence and tabling. Johnson’s statement was about the

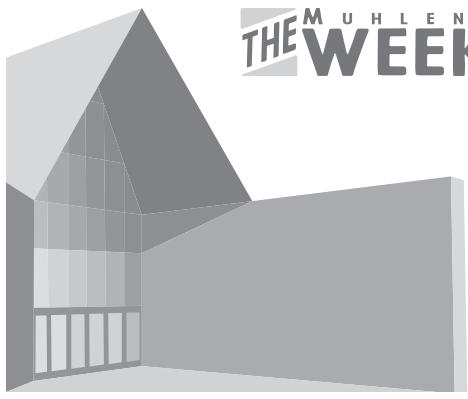
pressure that comes with attending college, such as “expecting you to do a bunch of different clubs and activities and all these organizations but also to be mentally healthy” led to her assertion that “supporting a system that actually supports the students is really important.” Wolf expressed his plans to implement a system where volunteers could bring meals from the dining hall to those who are not feeling well enough to go in person, and Klinger shared a plan to bring back “breathing days” where students have off from classes and no assignments are due. Klinger believes doing so will help to create “an open dialogue between students and the College administration about student workload and stress [that] would be important for having the needs of the students met and their voices heard.”

On the topic of student involvement in SGA, Safi stated, “If SGA became more active on social media or communicated the projects they’re working on, it can help grow engagement and create a larger

sense of community. Even if these projects are incomplete or a work in progress. I think students should know that SGA is doing work for them.” Dsouza emphasized the importance of “Making my fellow mates feel that every minute concern of theirs matters [and] isn’t burdening or obligatory for me,” which further encourages the SGA to increase its contact with the student body. Other ideas from the candidates included Safi’s idea to partner with local schools and the community to promote school spirit and involvement, Klinger’s plan to pay students more for on-campus jobs and Lin’s plan to promote better access to resources for both individuals and clubs.

Polls opened on Friday, Dec. 2, and the student body had 24 hours to vote for their representatives. The winners include: Margery Leit ‘24, Sabeen Safi ‘26, Vish Dsouza ‘26, Matthew Klinger ‘24, and Nya Johnson ‘23.





“We need to focus on bringing our best, not worrying about what anyone else is bringing.”

- Blanca Rodriguez-Evangelista, “Pose”

# First Peak Film Festival premieres

By ALMARAH URMAN  
STAFF WRITER

On Nov. 18 and 19, Muhlenberg’s media and communication department, along with the newly reformed Muhlenberg Film Association (MFA), put on their first film festival in over a decade. This was done in collaboration with the Allentown Civic Theatre, and the 12 films selected were shown over the course of two days.

Beyond some invited submissions, all the films were produced entirely by current or recently graduated students. Many of them were made by media and communication students during their time in Dublin, Ireland while studying abroad.

“Selecting the films for the festival was a long and hard process. There were so many submissions and I wish we could’ve screened them all, but we had to make informed decisions about what we wanted our festival to say and what kind of impact we wanted to have,” remarked Amira Jackson, ‘24, one of the student coordinators of the event.

“I personally really enjoyed getting to see all the student films that I had never gotten a chance to see before this, it also allowed me to judge them unbiasedly... I also really enjoyed doing the publicity for the film festival and creating the programs was so much fun for me,” said Kayla Rivera ‘23, another coordinator.

“The planning that went into this event turned out to be quite a lot of work. We would meet at least once a week to discuss general things and make sure we could achieve what we wanted to... Without that



PHOTO COURTESY OF JACOB SWARTZ '23

“Dust on the Lens” by Jake Weisblatt, Jacob Swartz, and Max Rose ‘23 won Best Cinematography at the MFA Film Festival.

teamwork, this would have been so much harder... Later on, it became more about getting things done in a crunch which we were able to do. Getting the films, programs and awards ready in time was a lot of work but was a great time in the end. We all kept each other in check and made sure things were getting done, which they always were,” said the third coordinator, Joe Romano, ‘23.

The festival was a competition, and the film that walked away with the most awards, including best fiction film, was “Bombshell” which was based on the complex relationship between a pair of sisters.

“The idea for the script was based off of a loose, dramatized version of my real-life relationship with my sister. I really wanted to write something about the complex relationships siblings have with each other; I think it’s such an in-

teresting dynamic that so many people can relate to. From there me, Mallory [Goldsmith ‘22] and Arielle [Weinberger ‘22] all worked together to work out the kinks in the script in order to get our final version.” explained alum Maggie Mustion ‘22, director, writer and co-producer along with Goldsmith and Weinberger.

Ruhani Singh ‘23 and Sarah Bui ‘23, who took home the best documentary award for their film “Mair” said, “After spending a lot of time in Dublin and other cities in Ireland, we were strongly impressed by the reading culture. Irish people read everywhere: on the bus, in the park and even in the pub. People really enjoy reading. There are so many independent bookshops that have been present for a few decades in Ireland. So we started wondering what makes these bookshops alive and how these bookshops nurture people’s love for reading and literature.

We were not trying to make a documentary but wanted to focus more on sharing the stories and memories of people’s relationships with these bookshops as these bookshops are slowly disappearing. The idea was trying to resemble the process of reading a book which opens a whole world for one’s imagination. The drawings, collages, different images [and] imaginative characters are brought together to help build up that world.”

Of course, the packed audience’s reactions to the films were one of the most exciting things about the festival, a sentiment shared by the teams of all 12 films during the festival talkback and award acceptance speeches as well as later statements. When the showings concluded, chatter about the projects was heard from the various groups walking back to Muhlenberg.

“I thought all the films were amazing in their own way. They all evoked different emotions as well. There were some that were like ‘haha funny’ and others that were deep reflections on the self. They were all wonderful... that was my first time viewing any film work in a theater since before COVID!” said Ryan Steremberg, ‘25.

“I’m not a film major... but walking in to sit together and see this art was so special to me. I was just really moved by what just happened in there, and I would love to see this happen again,” mused Sabrina Vitale, ‘23, as she walked out of the theater.

The First Peak Film Festival was a massive success, showcasing some truly incredible student film work to a full Civic Theatre audience.

## Jakeim Hart’s ‘16 unexpected journey to Broadway

By KATHERINE CONLON  
CO-NEWS EDITOR

Jakeim Hart ‘16 was just 10 years old when he entered into the world of theater. As a young boy from Long Island, just having moved to a new town in Virginia, he tripped out for the basketball team to gain a sense of community and make new friends. “They’re really cut-throat down there,” explained Hart, going in-depth about the results when the hunt for community did not go to plan. So, he decided to audition for the musical. Hart noted that “I’d been used to singing and playing stuff in front of people. So, it wasn’t that far of a leap for me. So I just did the audition and got the part and I’ve been doing it ever since.”

When the time came for Hart to choose where he would be attending college,

Muhlenberg became a viable option due in part to the large sum of scholarship money and the encouragement of former head of the theatre department and professor emeritus Charlie Richter. Hart packed up his bags and headed to Allentown.

Hart describes Associate Professor of Theatre Troy Dwyer’s production of “Romeo and Juliet” as a pivotal moment in his Muhlenberg career. Hart performed in and composed music for the play and describes the impact of the experience, saying, “I’ve been trying to chase that feeling in my professional life. It was just a very encouraging environment and very artistically fulfilling and I felt like I unlocked something within myself that I just previously hadn’t done before.”

Out of college, Hart went on to pursue acting as his career. Prior to COVID-19

decimating the theater industry and taking away the livelihood of individuals working in the field, Hart was performing in a musical known as “Sing Street” which was set to transfer to Broadway. “Sing Street” was scrapped at the time as a result of the pandemic and Hart described the period following this as “two years of nothing.” Hart outlined the toll the pandemic took on him saying, “[I] was trying to figure out what else I have to offer the world besides singing and acting and playing music for people.”

Then, “Almost Famous” came along. Originally, Hart auditioned for the role of the lead guitarist in the play’s fictitious band. After not hearing back for several months from the casting team and his father passing away at around the same time, Hart was ready to give up. “It was a really dark point in my life and I didn’t

really want to do anything with music, or art or theater just because it made me really sad,” said Hart.

However, in this very bleak moment, Hart received an email that would change his life’s trajectory. The higher-ups at “Almost Famous” had cast the role Hart originally auditioned for; however, the part of the conniving band manager and the understudy for the part of the guitarist was still up for grabs and they were interested in Hart taking on the job. After a short audition process, Hart booked the role.

On a final note, Hart shared a kernel of advice for Muhlenberg students who are considering taking on a career in the acting industry. Hart stated that “if you were meant to be doing this, stick through it through the good times, and the bad.”



# “Reset: New Dances” brings new works to the stage

*Student-choreographers collaborate with dancers to create a unique performance.*

BY JOHNNY VEGLIA  
CO-ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

The Baker Theatre delighted audience members this past weekend with “Reset: New Dances,” featuring works from 10 student choreographers who each highlighted their own unique artistic style and expressions of movement. “It was a glorious show that compelled me and kept me hooked from the first show to the last,” stated Ava Duskic ‘23, an audience member.

The choreographers were given full independence in developing their pieces and the themes they would like to highlight in collaboration with the over 50 dancers and other members of the creative and production team. Assistant Professor of Dance Natalie Gotter, the artistic director for the show, mentioned in the program, “Throughout the process, we have been asking ourselves, What does a reset look like?... As this generation of dancers grapples with questions of equity, care, labor and storytelling, I have been touched, inspired and deeply proud of the work and conversations that are being raised by these choreographers.” Marissa Cohen ‘25 served as the assistant artistic director for the pieces.

“I was given full freedom throughout the semester to embark on my own creative journey with the guidance of artistic director Natalie Gotter and my dance professors Randall Anthony Smith, Heidi Cruz-Austin and Robyn Watson. Although the theme of the show was ‘Reset,’ each of us choreographers interpreted the prompt in our own ways and we were able to pursue our artistic visions, wherever they took us,” stated Claire Spenard ‘23.

Spenard explored the idea of childhood and playfulness of toy soldiers with a physical representation of these props in her piece, “At Play.” The piece featured AnnaMaria Fernandez ‘24 and Amy Staphorst ‘24 with Spenard dancing as



“RESET: New Dances” highlighted student choreographers and their exploration of grief, capitalism, and other significant topics.

well due to health reasons for one of her dancers. Staphorst shared, “This piece felt like we found the movement first and then used our training to inform the movement and clarify it for the audience.”

“The process working with [Spenard] was one of the most collaborative and—for lack of a better word—ethnographic experiences I’ve had here at Muhlenberg,” stated Fernandez. “She had a really clear idea in mind and worked with us and our understanding of it to make it come to life.”

“The most rewarding part of the process was when my dancers felt juiced about the piece or excited to bring an idea to the table. When my dancers latched on to the work and felt connected to it in their own way this is when I felt the most rewarded. It’s one thing to have a vision on your own but to share it with other invested artists is a gift,” stated Spenard.

The collaborative process was also extended with other choreographers and dancers throughout the creative process, all of whom had the ability to make consequential creative decisions.

“We made decisions about the story/theme, costumes, music and lighting while choreographing the whole thing on top of that. It was a lot of decision making but it was the first time I had ever been in charge of putting together something like this,” stated Riley Hammett ‘23, the choreographer of “Miles Unraveled.”

“Rehearsals with Riley were a space for positivity, good vibes, collaboration and support. Tap dance can be a difficult learning and creating process because filling up an eight count for a modern dance could be a prep and a turn, in tap dance, you could be making 20 sounds. [Hammett] definitely used that ability to fill up an eight-count with sound, making the dance really challenging but amazing,” stated Erika Dubin ‘23, a dancer in “Miles Unraveled.”

Head theatre technician Paul Theisen crafted the lighting design for the show in collaboration with the choreographers. Kiana Grella ‘23 served as the costume designer for the piece and allowed for the stories and themes of each piece to be represented while still making the clothing flexible for dancers and movement.

Dancers were able to be in multiple pieces as well and experience different movements based on each choreographer and their artistic process. The only central guideline for the show was the name “Reset.”

“The choreographic process for both the pieces I performed in were really unique and special in their own ways, especially because they were two completely different movement qualities,” stated Molly Layden ‘24. “Each cast was really special to me as well.” Layden participated in Hammett’s piece along with Ruthy Freeberg’s ‘23 piece “Loved Out of Being.”

Leanna Niesen ‘24 was the production stage manager and described how the process was exciting for them thanks to the new opportunity of being a dance stage manager.

“My process as the production stage manager of ‘Reset’ was really amazing and rewarding. I have never worked on a dance show before so it was very new for me... I would say probably the biggest challenge doing this show as opposed to other shows I’ve done was just the size of it. We had such a huge cast, we had more than fifty dancers working on the show and just keeping track of all those people and their conflicts and all of that was definitely a challenge for me, but it was also really rewarding for me, especially as a dance major myself. Getting to work with other dance students and getting to work with other choreographers was really fantastic,” stated Niesen.

Layden concluded, “Getting to see all of the hard work of the choreographers and dancers come to life was absolutely incredible, especially seeing them evolve each night of tech, as well as over the semester’s worth of rehearsals. Every single piece was so dynamic and exciting and so individual to each choreographer, you could really see each of them shine through in the movement.”

## Studios debut with three student-run productions

BY DANNY MILKIS, IAN CLARK & JOHNNY VEGLIA  
A&C TEAM

The Muhlenberg Theatre Association (MTA) premiered the fall 2022 Studio Production season from Nov. 17-20 in the Studio Theatre. The season featured three unique shows, with all aspects of production commandeered and executed by students.

The MTA produced its second full-length musical theater piece, “tick, tick... BOOM,” directed by Brayden Stallman ‘23, music directed by Bethany Qian ‘25 and choreographed by Amelie Parczany ‘24.

The musical tells the story of composer Jonathan Larson as he navigates life as an artist in New York City, longing to be recognized for creating something

groundbreaking.

Director Brayden Stallman ‘23 explains, “I chose this show because I’m struggling with approaching a milestone in my life just like Jon is in the play, and what comforts him is that ‘his friends are there too.’ That’s really something that felt like a huge part of this process for me.”

“One of the highlights of working on ‘tick tick... BOOM’ was being surrounded by such an incredible team that I could not have done the project without,” continued Stallman. “My creative team, my cast, my design team, the MTA production team—there are way too many people to mention. They all brought so much joy and love to the project.”

One of the other shows put on in the festival was Qui Nguyen’s “She Kills Monsters,” directed by Connor McCully ‘23. The show tells the story of Agnes Evans,

mourning the sudden death of her family, and posthumously connecting with her sister, Tilly, through a fantastical adventure within Tilly’s Dungeons & Dragons notes.

Piper Woods ‘23, who played Evil Gabbi in the show, commented that, “This show was one of the most technically complex I have ever worked on, period... None of my previous projects required this amount of emotional upkeep. ‘She Kills’ is a tough show to go through. There is a lot of violence, both physical and mental, but the cast really held everyone up so even the tough moments were softened a bit.”

Woods’ comment rings true. From dragon heads, to magic missile blasts, or even gelatinous cubes, “She Kills Monsters” is nothing short of a behemoth of a show to put on and a challenge that this cast and crew were ripe to take on.

The show featured intense and complex battles, choreographed by McCully, that heightened the show’s fantastical and comedic elements even further.

Lilli Brown ‘23, who played Vera, said “She Kills Monsters” was an extremely technologically and logistically challenging show to produce. The director, cast and crew did an excellent job managing all the elements of this show. One of my favorite parts of the show was the costumes, which were all hand made by our costume designer [Katie Harris ‘24].”

“I couldn’t have asked for a better production to have as my introduction into college theater. I’ve been doing theatre since I was four years old, and I’ve never worked with a more amazing cast, crew and creative team and I’m incredibly proud of our run,” said Meg Trageser ‘25

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# 'Berg students hit the runway

## SGA celebrates ball culture with Tens Across the Board.

BY IAN CLARK  
ASSISTANT A&C EDITOR

Earlier this week, on Sunday, Dec. 4, the Event Space was alive with music and cheers as Tens Across the Board, an event hosted by the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB) Committee of the Student Government Association (SGA) in partnership with Queer & Trans People of Color Collective (QTPOCC) was well underway.

Tens Across the Board is an event that honors and celebrates ball culture, a subset of LGBTQ+ culture popular among Black and Latinx people. Ball culture has a lot of similarities to drag culture, featuring gender as the main form of performance and a heavy emphasis on costumes and dance, specifically featuring a form of dance called 'voguing' that is characterized by poses performed in rapid succession to music. Ball culture became popularized around the 60s in New York City and gained more traction throughout the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

As chair of the DEI&B Committee, Matthew McCray '24 has the mindset of creating "events, programs, and activities that truly give all students of Muhlenberg the opportunity to embrace their true pride and be celebrated for it." With this in mind, he started planning Tens Across the Board, beginning the process by "having conversations with local members of the Vogue community, in order to honor the ballroom culture for what it truly is. The DEI&B Committee made sure to create categories that were best suitable and inclusive for Muhlenberg's community."

The turnout for the event was incredible with many people showing up and



Joey Marcacci '23 strikes a pose.

walking for the different categories like Alien Superstar, Catwalk, Spins/Dips, Hands, Hair, Duckwalk, Elegance and many more.

Amira Jackson '24, an attendee and participant in the event said, "This event was much needed on this campus, especially for queer and LGBTQ+ students of color. To be in a space led by an MC and judges of color, it created something illuminating and beautiful. Everyone was accepted how they came and there was a wonderful sense of support in the room that night."

Like McCray's initial vision, Tens Across the Board was a completely supportive environment, especially for students that are not as familiar with ball culture. The event gave a firsthand per-

spective into this subculture and an opportunity for people to learn more about it head-on by walking and for many also helped support their self-image and confidence too.

Another member of the DEI&B committee, Kris Jimenez '26, talked about this saying, "It was definitely a nerve-racking experience to get out of your comfort zone and walk in front of so many people but my friends were there to watch me and hype me up so as soon as I got on that floor, I knew it was time to shine and I definitely did!"

Jolie Lanning '25, another participant, discussed her experience with Tens Across the Board, "The energy was absolutely amazing. Originally I wasn't going to walk because I've never done anything

like it before, but after seeing the first few categories I decided to just go for it. I'm so glad I did because I had so much fun. I felt beautiful, powerful, sexy and just so at home in my body. I really hope they do it again next semester."

Enjoyment in the event wasn't regulated only to participants, people who were just there to watch thoroughly enjoyed the experience as well. Attendee Mustafa Hall '23 said, "It's always a pleasure and privilege to be in spaces where Queerness and Queer joy is celebrated and honored. I loved watching different people I didn't expect to walk in a category perform. And I also loved seeing how everyone interpreted each specific category. It was an honor to be there and I hope this event becomes a Muhlenberg tradition."

Co-leader of QTPOCC, Gio Merrifield '23 spoke about his experience as a judge during the event, "I was really surprised with the turnout... I really hope that this event happens year after year after year. It's always lovely having LGBTQIA+ events on campus showcasing our uniqueness and our beauty in so many different ways! I want to thank Matt McCray for inviting myself and Maria Rivera ['23] as we are co-leaders of QTPOCC to be a part of this event. I feel truly honored."

McCray saw the overwhelming love and support from the event and commented, "DEI&B Committee is proud to announce that there will be a second Tens Across the Board event next semester, so be on the lookout for dates and categories. DEI&B will continue to create spaces, conversations and environments that are inclusive to all and create active community change and celebration."

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who played Kalliope.

Brown continued with a memory of the show about the song "Linger" by The Cranberries, "The cast adapted the song as our own little anthem and whenever we needed to get each other's attention during rehearsal or elsewhere one of us would start singing the song."

"There's something about student-produced theater that is so special and rewarding to work on... 'She Kills Monsters' is a play so full of heart, and I can only hope the Muhlenberg community took something away from our show," concluded Trageser.

The last of the three shows for the Studios season included "God of Carnage" by Yasmina Reza, directed by Joey Marcacci '23 and assistant directed by Eben Cornine '23. The play focused on the story of four adults coming together to discuss an incident that occurred between their sons, but the true nature of the parents would come to showcase how they are the children themselves, metaphorically. It's a story about privilege, hurt, isolation and the lack of what people know.

The scenic design by Levi Roush '24 utilized bright colors in the set of orange, red, blue and more to bring a playground aesthetic to this ordinary living room.

Roush was also responsible for a vomit contraption.

"The vomit contraption was a journey but working with my scenic designer [Roush] and my assistant director [Cornine], it made the process a lot smoother. It just took trial and error, and a lot of clean up," stated Marcacci.

Meghan McGorry '23, who portrayed Annette Raleigh, mentioned, "I was surprisingly really excited about getting the chance to puke onstage, and it was actually a very technical process that required a lot of choreography and practice before the performances. Everyone was really great throughout the process though, and it was really enjoyable."

In addition to the fake vomit, the rest of the experience went well and allowed for a collaborative environment between the actors, designers and other members of the production team. McGorry also mentioned, "It was genuinely such a joy to go to rehearsal and create with everyone."

Marcacci continued, "The creative process for studios was structured well by the MTA and they gave me the resources I needed in order to be successful. Studios went very well and I had few issues with the whole process."

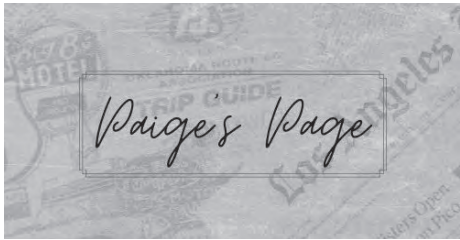


The cast of Tick Tick Boom performing "Sunday."

The production stage manager of the show, Hannah Cohen '25, stated, "'God of Carnage' was such an amazing experience. I got to work with seniors who I hadn't met before. The best part was probably working with the design team to prepare set, lighting, sound and costumes. From the longest cue ever to the disgusting vomit, from the obnoxious phone sounds

to the carefully chosen outfits, the design team put together an amazing show. The actors really took on their roles too. Each night they improvised a little bit more, making it serious yet funny at the same time. I loved working on this show and I can't wait to see what's next for all of us!"





## Paige's Page

BY PAIGE WEISBURG  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

**Hey besties!** The day, unfortunately, has come. Welcome to the last ever edition of Paige's Page. As I write this I am incredibly emotional but I still want us to have fun, so get ready for some emotional whiplash. The Paige Weisburg special if you will. This week we are going to be giving me, and hopefully all of you, a little bit of closure. One of my biggest concerns with graduating in the fall has been that it's not going to really feel over. For those of you who are not in the shoes of myself and many other people this semester, you are probably mentally checked out and ready to go hoping for the comfort of a break before a new semester begins. For those of you graduating like me, you are probably feeling the same but there is no winter break, there is no "it's fine we can try again next semester," but there IS existing in the real world now (that was a little brutal, sorry lol). I am frankly terrified to be saying any of this because even though I have known this was coming, I have been running from the reality of it. This doesn't mean that I won't be answer-

ing some of your final questions this semester though. This week I hope to leave you more confident and ready to take on whatever comes next. Let's get started!

**Q** Hi Paige, would your younger self be proud of where you're at in life now?

Hey bestie, I think so. I think she would definitely be surprised. The younger versions of me were a little too high strung I think, maybe a little impractical about some things, but she was, and still is, ambitious and driven. I have done many things that I never thought I would have up until this point. I also have not done a lot of things I thought I would have done. Honestly, though, I wouldn't really change anything. Everybody is growing and changing everyday, and sometimes you surprise yourself with what you can do. I discussed this in therapy a couple of weeks ago actually. Different isn't bad, it's just different. Just because some things in my three and a half years of college did not go how I originally planned doesn't make me any less accomplished in the things I have done. So don't think about this as "would your younger self be proud," think about how you, present you, feels about the person you are and the things that you have accomplished. Existing can be really difficult. Waking up everyday and choosing to be authentically yourself can be really difficult, but no one can do it like you can.

**Q** Hey Paige, how do you deal with imposter syndrome?

Hi bestie! I'm so glad you asked this question. I think it is something that everyone can relate to, and I know I have certainly experienced this a lot during my time here. Whenever I have felt this, it really helps me to talk it out with someone who is able to validate my experiences. Specifically, experiences that have led to really fantastic outcomes that I'm wrongfully doubting myself about. Also, I know it's cliché, but everything happens for a reason, so you definitely deserve the good things coming to you. Even if you don't, who cares. Success is subjective, take your wins as they come. Not everyone can slay as hard as you.

**Q** Hi Paige, what's your favorite Paige's Page response that you've shared? What response would you change or do over again?

Hey bestie! Asking me to pick a favorite of these is like asking a parent to pick a favorite child (obviously I have one but I'm not telling). I surprisingly don't know, necessarily, if there are any I would change either. I stand by all of the advice I have given, but I know I can add to a few. However, here is one I chose: Hey Paige! Do you have any advice on how to be more confident and comfortable in my own skin?

When I answered this question, I talked about the way I express myself outwardly with fashion and accessories and just being who I want to be. While I definitely think that is solid advice and it is a step toward being comfortable in your own skin, I think that it's much deeper than that. I have realized the first step to be-

ing confident is really truly liking yourself as a person. I know that sounds stupid and also very obvious, but it can be really hard to sit with yourself, learn who you are and enjoy the person you are hanging out with like you would any of your close friends. Sitting with yourself can be really challenging but it is really necessary. If you wouldn't want to be around you then become a version of yourself that you can have fun being alone with. Loving that person will make you a more evolved and confident person. Obviously, this isn't something that happens overnight, but working towards this goal is worth it. If that doesn't work for you, fake it 'til you make it. If you say something enough, it becomes true.

To my complete and utter dismay, now is the time to finally say goodbye. Thank you so much to everyone who has sent me questions, everyone who picks up a copy every week (or gets one shoved at them probably by me), and everyone who has supported me and Paige's Page since its birth a little over a year ago. I have had the best time writing this every week and I am really going to miss this as a constant in my life at Muhlenberg.

If you want to keep up with me, follow me on Instagram @paigeweisburg!

## Closing the chapter on Paige's Page

BY PAIGE WEISBURG  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

**I**'ve never been really good at the whole goodbye thing. I have developed a love recently, here at Muhlenberg, for the Irish goodbye—a swift and anonymous exit, followed by a "where did you go?" text the next morning. But typically, I am known for a good old-fashioned Jewish goodbye. For those that may not know, a Jewish goodbye is a goodbye that starts approximately 30 minutes before you actually plan to leave so you can say individual goodbyes to people who probably could deal with a wave as you walk out the door. This is my Jewish goodbye.

My start at The Weekly is one that many people don't know about because it was anonymous. My freshman year (and current) roommate, Copy Editor Brianna Kovit, and I had an article written about an event that happened to us and though I appreciated the art of journalism at the time, this instance did not spark something in me. I started writing for an online publication called HerCampus freshman year that died during the pandemic. I wrote about my opinions and things that put me front and center of my writing because they always say, "write what you know," and I know myself pretty well. Since I stopped writing my sophomore year, I realized that I really missed having something that I could show people

that I cared about and put work into every week or so. I started joking that I should start an advice column in The Weekly even though I had never been involved in The Weekly. My amazing friend, Editor-in-Chief Cydney Wilson, and my lovely editor, Mustafa Hall, thought the idea was cute and took a chance on me, Paige's Page—not at all) certified advice giver.

Last year was the year of "the bit." I decided to do a lot of things "for the bit" because it made me feel like I had a purpose beyond that of my pre-existing commitments. I decided that once my time in leadership positions was ending, I wanted to have something to soften the blow of being a nobody with no jobs (a person that had time on her hands). My involvement with The Weekly was born due to this phenomenon and so was Paige's Page Live. As a child, I loved to perform—not to the extent of a lot of Muhlenberg students—but I did the school musical for a few years, and I sang in a few talent shows. Since being here, I did a couple of open mics, I was in a Red Door show (which I slayed by the way), and of course, my very own Paige's Page Live. The idea of doing this event did actually terrify me though. Even though I have performed and I am not afraid of public speaking, Paige's Page is a lot more vulnerable than I thought it to be before I did this event. I was really anxious that people would think I was bad and not funny. I was worried about not being able to hide behind my little Canva

logo and confident sounding words—usually located on page 8. I was proven wrong, which I usually am about things like this. I am so proud of what that, and Paige's Page have become.

I am about to really expose myself here, so haters, stop reading. I have used Paige's Page for good, and I have used Paige's Page to tell people things that I didn't want to tell them to their faces so they can think that the way they proceed in a difficult situation (sometimes involving me) is their idea when it is actually mine \*teehee\*. I also used it to answer questions that I had myself (oops another exposure) and sometimes I submitted questions that I answered. But I think I did that for the same reason a lot of you did. Hearing something from someone else who validates your situation and your feelings is much more effective than telling yourself what you need to do. Paige's Page was so healing for me. I got to make people laugh and feel emotions and think about their lives every week.

Leaving Muhlenberg was something that, of course, I saw coming. However, endings hit you so fast and so hard. If you had asked the obnoxious girl who walked onto campus in August 2019 what she was doing at this very moment, she would have probably given you a really annoying and not self-aware answer about graduating early and being better than everyone. If you told her what she was going to do during her time here, she wouldn't have

believed you. As a future-oriented and by-the-book kind of person, she probably would have not been happy with the fact that I changed my mind as many times as I did, or be crazy about some of the decisions I have made. But currently, I could not be more proud of myself and the way that I have grown over the last three and a half years. I'm going to miss late night walks on Chew Street, weekend nights ending at the Generals Quarters, gossiping with everyone at Shabbat dinner at Hillel and distracting all of the incredible, smart, funny and talented Weekly staff during production when I don't have to be there. I'll miss living within 10 minutes of all of my best friends and seeing everyone I know everywhere, even the people I don't really want to see.

I don't entirely know what comes next, and by writing Paige's Page almost every week for the last year and a half, I've learned that that's okay. I do know that whatever it is, it's going to be amazing. Thank you for laughing with me and letting me into your lives. It has been both an honor and a pleasure to share my unqualified and correct opinions with you.

**Bye Besties <3**  
Paige



# The mind of a copy editor

BY BRIANNA KOVIT  
COPY EDITOR

No one at The Weekly really knows what I do.

And that's OK.

At the start of my freshman year, I knew that I wanted to write for The Weekly. I had been obsessed with writing since as early as I could remember, and I knew that if I wanted to write at Muhlenberg, The Weekly was the place to do it. But a few Arts & Culture stories deep into that fall semester, I encountered a problem. I realized I wasn't as passionate about writing as I thought I was. I was confused about why writing articles felt like a chore. I loved having written once I was finished, and that thrill of being published still never fades, but I wasn't excited by the stories I was telling. I fell out of touch with The Weekly for much of the rest of my freshman year, and my passion for writing was indefinitely put on a pause.

Then came that dreadful at-home fall 2020 semester. I knew I needed more of a connection to the Muhlenberg community while I worked out of the subdued walls of my childhood bedroom. I decided to give The Weekly another shot. This time I joined the staff as assistant news editor—a concept that's just laughable to me now. I have so much respect for our section editors. It's a 24/7 job of coming up with ideas, assigning stories to writers and being accountable for a story if a writer falls through. And truthfully, I just wasn't all that excited about Muhlenberg news

enough to do that either. And though I quickly jumped ship from assistant news editor, this position taught me where my real passion lied: editing. A word-smith—not a storyteller; I quickly discovered that editing is what I was truly obsessed with.

Becoming the copy editor was like finally finding the missing piece to my Weekly puzzle—and my Muhlenberg one too. The semester I became copy editor was also our first semester back on campus since COVID. Every Tuesday night since that return, I have had the absolute nerdiest of pleasures playing with, and fixing up, the sentence structure and paragraph placement in our articles until it's 3 A.M. and no one can read straight anymore (or 3:47 A.M. that one really bad night). And while I have loved every second of it, what has really kept me coming back to The Weekly every week and every semester is the people.

I'll miss sitting in The Weekly office gasping at "Glee" cast drama and family vlogger scandals (all because I exposed myself in an OpEd that one time). I'll miss delirious gossip at 2 A.M. under those bright office lights. I'll miss defending the AP Style's decision to exclude Oxford commas from journalistic work (even though, in truth, I disagree. But I am a rule follower.) If YOU want to bring the Oxford comma to The Muhlenberg Weekly—become the copy editor and make the change you wish to see in the world. Please. Thank you.

Thanks for a great ride, Weekly. I'll miss you.

# Safety Box

BY HOPE BIDDLE  
STAFF WRITER



In the grey and confined safety box hidden in the downstairs office  
Lives my other father.

Tucked away under passports

That only have one stamp,

And wills that need to be changed,

As my possible replacements have all died four years ago,

The annulment of a naive suburban eighteen-year-old girl remains.

Meticulously moved to cover her past

I'll never know

I read: Donna M. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ .

The name and life of my Mom legally erased,

But desperately imagined by my fingertips that trace

Her foreign last name.

I perfectly place papers back into the specific space

In our history they hold,

Re-bending and re-building the facade.

I am apprehensive of shattering the microscope

I view my Mom through.

With this tepid abandoned paper

Now dripping with my uncomfortable sweat,

As it disrupts

My lack of secrets that need to be locked away.

Thick mahogany bookshelves, filled with familial photographs

Of great-grandfathers I've never met

And books of the Bible spread like a preacher

Changed the trajectory of their life to interior designs of

Overflowed and magical offices,

Line the white wooden-paneled walls.

As I step into the fluorescent-lit cream colored hallway,

With white walls covered in antique gold-plated religious artwork

Bright enough to distract an immature child from finding

The safety box hidden on the highest shelf of a closet filled with old, Cuban cigars,

I ask my Mom anyway.

My dry armpits, feet, and palms want a lie but,

I know a first love cannot be forged.

No air to choke around

Because my Mom has already claimed it to be hers,

She procrastinates her reasoning

Saying 'not now'.

I don't dare speak, but I question the reality of my Mom knowing me

Since I came into this world, bloodied, beaten, and swollen

While I have yet to learn the secrets she whispered in smallest hours

At summer camp, or what the hair color was of the first person she loved,

Or even what she sounds like when she sings.



# July 7, 2022— 12:18am

BY ANNAMARIA FERNANDEZ  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It's the middle of the summer and as the fireworks spit their loud cracks I wonder why I don't do the same.

I've been questioning why I've been questioning myself for a while and haven't seemed to find an answer.

As my eyes pool with tears and my nose drips

I continue asking myself

Why?

How can I give love when I'm still learning to give it to myself? How

can I ask for healing from someone when I haven't let myself heal? I

want so badly to feel safe

that the thought of a safety net sickens me.

I've become so comfortable in discomfort that warmth has begun to feel like

ice. I fear that it is too late for me.

I've been telling myself this lie since I learned of its power.

So much so that I've told myself it is the truth.

How to reverse a belief you've constructed for yourself over years.

Love,

A concerned owner of this body

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor (bergweeklyoped@gmail.com) or the Editor-in-Chief (weeklyeditor@gmail.com) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.



# TURF WARS

## *Non-contact injuries: turf versus natural grass*

BY JORDAN SHERIS  
ROOKIE WRITER

Injuries in football are rarely avoided. Players get concussions and broken bones, all from playing their sport. But there are some injuries that can be avoided by one change. Changing from turf to natural grass thereby avoiding non-contact injuries.

When playing on the football field, one of the most important things is whether or not the field is turf or natural grass. Playing football on any field can lead to injuries, but a turf field has a tendency to lead to more non-contact injuries such as an ACL tear, ruptured achilles, sprained ankle and much more. The textural difference between grass and turf leads to repetitive wear on joints from a soft foot-plant point. In a recent study conducted by the National Football League Players Association, the union protecting the players in the National Football League (NFL) looked at the injuries in the NFL, both contact and non-contact, and details the difference between artificial turf and natural grass. It concluded that non-contact injuries had a higher chance of occurring on turf fields than natural grass,

urging all NFL stadiums to make an immediate switch from the old artificial turf to natural grass in order to prevent these injuries from continuously occurring.

We see this trend continue into college football where many players are seen getting injured for no reason other than the fact that the field was turf and not natural grass. One of the biggest football schools, Notre Dame, has expressed their concerns over the home stadium they play in being changed from grass to turf. The team decided that they would change from the old tradition of natural grass to the up-and-coming trend that is turf. This change led to an uproar in one category, and that is non-contact injuries. It is clear that turf is increasing the likelihood of players getting non-contact injuries, yet the NFL and college stadiums continue to use turf instead of grass.

In an interview with one of the NFL's most prolific voices for player health and safety, Aaron Rodgers spoke about the concern of using turf fields and how it impacts injuries. In his interview, Rodgers discussed his love for playing on turf, but was urgent about making a change to natural grass to help avoid these non-contact injuries. Even with NFL players spread-



ing awareness about the dangers of turf, college football programs are making the change to synthetic turf instead of natural grass. This change is being made for one simple reason: turf is easier to maintain and less of a commitment.

Although players throughout the league have voiced their frustration over playing on turf fields, the NFL claims that the injury rate is the same for both turf

and grass and they don't plan on changing it any time soon. However, in data collected by the NFL's Player Association (NFLPA), it shows non-contact injuries were higher on artificial turf than on grass. The NFL claimed in their data that the percentage of injuries was the same, but that statistic was contested by outside researchers.

THE MUHLENBERG  
**WEEKLY**  
OPINIONS & EDITORIALS

## Senior photos nightmare

BY AYDEN LEVINE  
PHOTO EDITOR

I paid \$300 for my senior photos and I could've done a much better job with an iPhone and a flashlight.

On Oct. 6, the entire senior class got an email from Muhlenberg informing us that opportunities to get our senior photos done would begin soon and to sign up for slots quickly. Students were sent a link that directed us to Lauren Studios' website, where we could pick from three different types of session: "The Muhlenberg Basic Session" included shots of the student in business attire, and would be free or \$5 if you wanted proofs, "The Muhlenberg Graduation Session" included shots of the student in business attire and shots of the students in a cap, gown and Muhlenberg stole/Muhlenberg banner, and would cost \$10 or \$15 if you wanted proofs and "The Muhlenberg Executive Session" included everything from the other two sessions and additional "executive/career style photographs suitable for business use such as ID cards, job applications, resumes, and social media websites like LinkedIn" (laurenorders.com); this would cost us \$20 or \$25 if you wanted proofs.

Now maybe this was naive of my friends and I, but we were all led to believe that this initial cost would be the only time we would have to pay Lauren Studios. Nowhere in the sign up information or in the photo session with Lauren Studios did they say there would be a second price to get back my photos. So, you can imagine my surprise when the email

came in with the link to my photos and they were asking for a minimum of \$175 for printed out photos (and this package only included them printed out on basic photo paper, something that CVS can do for \$0.39 per photo.) If you wanted to just digitally download your photos, Lauren Studios requested you pay them \$349.95, but they weren't going to edit them for you. For an edited photo, you would have to pay them an additional \$20 or \$30 per photo (depending on basic or premium retouching.) Your almost \$350 would simply go towards them removing the words off of your photo and then emailing your photos to you in a Dropbox folder, which I was charged a \$14 shipping and handling fee for. Phew, that must've been hard work. I'm sure glad I paid them that much money.

After speaking with the person in charge of the Muhlenberg's yearbook, the Ciarla, Kristine Todaro, I learned that the first price that students paid for the basic or graduation sessions wasn't supposed to have occurred.

"This is the first I'm hearing about this," Todaro said. "They should not have charged you for that. The deal that we have with Lauren Studios is both the business attire and the cap and gown for free. The sitting is supposed to be free. The deal that we have set up with Lauren Studios is we wanted to make sure students got free senior portraits and a free yearbook. Unfortunately when it comes to the secondary costs, I agree, the prices are pretty outrageous."

The absurd prices and incorrect charges aren't the only issues students faced while working with Lauren Studios.

Guilia Gerschel '23 said, "They didn't give me the Muhlenberg banner or Muhlenberg stole for the photo, so I was literally in just a black cap and gown like a judge."

When I brought this up to Todaro she noted, "The week of October 24th through the 28th—for some reason—the photographer at times did not have a stole or banner and even some students were photographed without a cap and gown even though we had had for them to use."

In some cases students like Brianna Kovit '23 and Sarah Koenig '23 reported that they have yet to receive their photos back.

"I never even got my photos back. As someone who is graduating this semester, I was very excited to receive my senior photos. To not receive anything made the entire process not only a waste of time, but a waste of money and effort," said Kovit.

"I fully never got mine back. I had them taken in mid October and haven't heard anything since then. It says I have not yet been photographed on their website which is simply not true," said Koenig.

Todaro was horrified by this. "Oh my gosh. This is not how it worked last year. We had used another company for the 2021 yearbook and they were really having a hard time during COVID and it was really hard for people to get portraits and that was a mess. So I did research and we found [Lauren Studios] who came with better recommendations. They do hundreds of colleges and universities across the country. But there was no charge last year for seeing the proofs. You had access to the proofs and you could pick which

one you wanted as your portrait photo for free. The only charge that was supposed to happen is if you wanted [photos] beyond the cap and gown and business attire and if you wanted to buy a package. Those were the only things that were supposed to have additional costs. I am going to fix this and I will have them reimburse the folks who were charged incorrectly, and I will relay that concern to her and tell her that our students would appreciate a heads up that receiving the photos back is an additional fee."

In a follow-up interview with Todaro, she confirmed that Lauren Studios will be refunding students who paid for the Basic and Graduation Sessions.

This story is not only an issue of a mis-managed company and shocking prices, but of inequity. Every student deserves to have nice photos taken of them to celebrate their hard work and graduation. Asking students to pay prices that many of them cannot afford to pay is extremely immoral. I called Lauren Studios customer service line to speak with them about this and was "reassured" that the company has a payment plan option for students to be able to pay for their photos over time. This simply does not negate the fact that they are asking students to pay the money in the first place.

While Lauren Studios is coming back to campus in January, I hope you decide to not waste your money on them. Instead there are many talented students on campus who can take your photos, such as Louis Cocco, Rachel Fuchs, Britney Jara, Rebecca Clark, Joe Romano and myself. We look forward to hearing from you!



# Athletics solving enrollment?

BY TOM HILLER  
MANAGING EDITOR

Muhlenberg College's 2022 student-body is the lowest recorded enrollment on campus within the last decade. Even if 'Berg is not the only institution suffering a decrease of enrolled students, the College has an ability to dictate how they will respond to the crisis at hand. The question still remains: what can Muhlenberg do to proactively address this? Specifically, how can certain departments, like athletics, play into this?

There is historic evidence that the success of athletic programs has increased student enrollment at different institutions. One can point to the many different 'cinderella teams' that pop up in the men's and women's DI basketball tournaments; those smaller DI schools do see a temporary uptick in enrollment following those seasons. These statistics, however, are not applicable because Muhlenberg and DIII sports do not provide as much

attention and revenue as the schools mentioned above.

When it comes to the 22 sports teams that make up NCAA DIII athletics on Muhlenberg's campus, student-athletes make up roughly 20 percent of undergraduate students on campus. If athletics are such a prominent component of the student-body, then a simple answer can be to boost athletics right? Researchers at Northcentral University studied how successful small institutions in the mid-west that competed in the DIII level performed when it came to this model. In a published study, the results found that although there is evidence suggesting student-athlete growth within these studied institutions, there is not a "formalized enrollment management strategies [and] using athletics as facilitators is not a guiding philosophy and practice for most academic institutions."

So then, why do student-athletes, as well as general students, decide to enroll on campus? For soccer player Olivia

Oberman '24, she says, "If I had not heard about Muhlenberg through word of mouth and through the athletic department, I don't think I would've known to look here. Muhlenberg has so many amazing things to offer, but I was not entirely aware until I visited and became a student-athlete here. I think we could always do a better job of marketing the school as a whole to a greater amount of geographic areas and in more depth... After gaining an appreciation for the campus, I was sold after seeing the way students interacted with each other and how genuine the people that I met were."

As for non-student athletes, like Patrick Carmody '23, he was sold on, "The academics, particularly when it came to the pre-med sphere. Physically, I thought the campus was nice enough but the student body seemed small, too small, but the merit aid that the school offered along with their ability to get students into medical school was too hard to say no to. When a college boasts a roughly 95 per-

cent acceptance rate to medical schools that is extremely impressive to someone who sees that as their future, of course, this rate of acceptance is due to people being aggressively weeded out but incoming students don't know that."

"The majority of the sports teams at Muhlenberg have seen success which is great for the College, but I wouldn't say the success has or will lead to increased enrollment rates," says Carmody. "I'm sure the success of programs leads to more athletic recruitment and thus a small boost in enrollment, especially considering just how successful these programs already are... The best way for the College to increase enrollment would be to double down on its strong suits in academics while actively making efforts to improve the areas that are lacking."

# Mules upset Hopkins

BY NOAH BERGER  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

On Saturday, Dec. 3, the Muhlenberg Mules traveled to Baltimore, Maryland for a basketball showdown against the (6-1) Johns Hopkins University Blue Jays. The (4-1) Mules knew they were in for a tough game, since they were playing against the two-time defending Centennial Conference basketball champions. As the referee tossed the basketball up in the air, none of that mattered. The only thing that mattered was that the Mules would dictate the tempo and dominate the scoreboard.

"It felt great playing against Johns Hopkins on Saturday and even better getting the win," said Jayson Williams-Johnson '25. "We approached the game the same way we have been with other teams this year. Although they are two-time defending CC champions we treat no team [as more] special than another rather than just going in and doing the things we have to do to get a win."

During the game, the Mules were powered by the duo of Giovanni Rubino '24 and Charlie Gillikin '25. Rubino was the leading scorer for the Mules tallying 23 points with six of his points coming from the free throw line, where he connected on all attempts. Gillikin had one of the best games of his Muhlenberg career thus far, totaling 16 points off the bench while going five for seven from the perimeter. However, the Mules' offensive attack did not rely solely on Rubino and Gillikin during the game, since Dan Gaines '22 and Williams-Johnson both dropped double-digit point totals.

The first half of the game was tight with Muhlenberg only holding a four point advantage at halftime. The Mules kept their momentum against the red-hot Hopkins team.

In the span of just over two minutes of the second-half, the Mules jumped off the second half with an 8-2 run. Despite the early run in the second half, the Mules knew that they needed to play their style of basketball in order to hold off Hopkins. Although Muhlenberg took a 15 point lead in the second half, the Blue Jays kept on fighting. There were a few instances where the Blue Jays brought the game back within single digits but Muhlenberg continued to persevere. With just over a minute left in regulation, Hopkins cut the Mules' lead to just four. After a few clutch free throws, the Mules were able to capture an away win against the seventh ranked Division III team in the nation with a score of 84-77.

"Beating Hopkins doesn't really change the outlook on our season, maybe to people on the outside but not us. As a team, we know what we are capable of and what we need to do to get big wins such as this one. It's important for us to stay locked in and do the things as a team to continue to win Centennial Conference games and other games as well, to continue getting wins like this for the rest of the season," said Johnson.

The Mules are ready for the rest of the season, as they look to be a top team in the Centennial Conference and make a bid for the championship.

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bun

CUBANO \$13

butter pressed  
ciabatta, honey pit  
ham, pulled pork, swiss,  
house mustard, dill  
pickles

B(ELLY) LT \$12

naple and beer braised  
pork belly, charred  
scallion aioli, butterhead  
lettuce, tomato

BAHN MI \$11

sous vide 5 spice pork  
tenderloin, pickled leek  
onion and cabbage,  
tiger sauce

CHICKEN CURRY

TACOS \$10

curried chicken thighs,  
pickled carrot  
cucumber sesame slaw,  
hoisin aioli, coriander  
lime crema

### THE WORKS \$18

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chicken or black beans

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vegetables, purple slaw, jalapeno cheddar  
cornbread, house chips, pork chili



## SIDES

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# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## Building team chemistry abroad

BY OLIVIA OBERMAN  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

While study abroad opportunities are highly sought out by many college prospects, it is not always feasible nor encouraged for student-athletes to study abroad given their commitment to academics on top of athletics, in and out of season. Study abroad offers students the ability to gain new perspectives about the world and themselves. One way that Muhlenberg and Muhlenberg athletics stands out, in this regard, is by fostering an environment in which student-athletes often do study abroad and an environment in which those experiences are seen as advantages to their commitments at home.

2022 All-America honorable mention and 2022 Centennial Conference first-team recipient on the Muhlenberg men's lacrosse team, Matthew Regan '24, was one student-athlete who took advantage of Muhlenberg's study abroad opportunities—specifically at the University of Maastricht in the Netherlands. He expressed, "What I loved most about going abroad this semester was being able to travel all over Europe with my best friends. It is a once in a lifetime opportunity and there's no one else I'd rather do it with. We're all preparing for this season by holding each other accountable and getting in the gym every day we can. The season is coming faster than we can imagine and being in shape is the best way to start the season in full stride."

Among the many in the athletic community who studied abroad this fall semester, were 11 members of the Muhlenberg men's lacrosse team. Six of those 11 studied at Florence University of the Arts in Florence, Italy while the other five attended Maastricht. The two groups even made efforts to travel together, making their time abroad more memorable. Although these universities of choice were their general home bases, they found themselves exploring a multitude of countries. A few of these student-athletes have reflected on their experiences.

"My favorite place that I visited while studying abroad was Split, Croatia. I had the opportunity to visit Croatia with four of my teammates and it was truly an incredible experience. It was our first trip to another country alone and we immediately started exploring the city and made some really cool friends and memories during our time there. Getting to go to the beach and seeing the mountains on



(pictured left to right) Matthew McDonald '24, Jack Avis '24, Matthew Regan '24, Brandon Caslow '24, Ryan May '24, Stephen Krug '24, Aidan Murphy '24, Jake Auerbach '24, Jack Taub '24, and Wyatt Malia '24. Not pictured: Jack Quinn '24.

the horizon was incredible and a sight I will never forget. We still keep in contact with the people we met while in Croatia and look forward to hopefully seeing them again in the future" expressed faceoff specialist Jake Auerbach '24, one of five who studied abroad at Maastricht.

One of the six who studied at Florence, defender Aidan Murphy '24, reflects, "My favorite place we visited abroad was Dublin, Ireland. Dublin was cool because it provided a good mix of the history, which was actually interesting, and a fun city. It stood out from other cities because Irish culture was very prevalent. For example, at pubs and restaurants they have live Irish music, as opposed to usual American going out music. We did tours of Jameson and Guinness factories, which are part of the history, and were very enjoyable."

Studying abroad may often encourage personal growth. It is easy to say that studying abroad with teammates may encourage collective growth as well. Although the groups were split up between Italy and the Netherlands, they were still able to come together on numerous occasions.

Attackman Ryan May '24 expressed, "We were able to meet up in Germany, Spain, Amsterdam, Ireland, Italy and the Netherlands." May continues, "I think

the experience of being abroad and gaining new perspectives all together has allowed us to build a lot more chemistry. I think this will translate positively into our season, on and off of the field."

Extensive traveling requires many skills; however, the development of skills only comes with experience. Goalie Stephen Krug '24 expressed, "Studying abroad has allowed me to branch out and build a network of connections with both American and European students. Whether it be a conversation while waiting to get coffee or traveling together for a weekend, I have drastically expanded my network personally and professionally. I have been blessed with the opportunity to visit so many new countries. Along with that comes travel difficulty (planning, rescheduling, delays, cancellations, etc.). I have learned how to solve problems on the spot and keep my wits about me in the process."

The development of these new skills and strengthening of old ones, even in the context of traveling, tends to seep into everyday activities. Jack Taub '24 builds off of this, connecting the dynamic of skill building to the game of lacrosse. "While studying abroad I have learned to adapt to my new and unfamiliar surroundings. On the lacrosse field you never know what to

expect, and you have to adapt to each situation on the fly. I believe my experiences abroad adapting will directly translate and help me on the lacrosse field."

Given his own experience in Florence this fall, defender Brandon Caslow '24 encourages other students and student-athletes alike to study abroad. "I would 100 percent recommend the study abroad experience for any students at Muhlenberg. It is a great opportunity to see the world, get outside your comfort zone, and meet new people. I was with all athletes from Muhlenberg and we were able to focus on staying in shape while still traveling and having a great time (and enjoying amazing Italian food)."

After a semester away, this tight knit group is ready to return home. With their regular season around the corner, Regan shares, "Personally, I have a very positive and motivated outlook for the upcoming season. After a devastating loss in the conference semifinals last year, I am more than excited to get back out there and grind with my teammates for the opportunity to win a Centennial Conference title."

Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Dec. 8 - Dec. 14

### Women's Track and Field



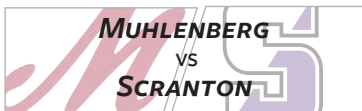
Fri, Dec. 9 @ 10:00 p.m.  
Lancaster, Pa.

### Men's Track and Field



Fri, Dec. 9 @ :00 a.m.  
Lancaster, Pa.

### Wrestling



Fri, Dec. 9 @ 7:30 p.m.  
Scranton, Pa.

Good luck to all the  
athletes competing over  
break!

GO MUHLENBERG!  
ROLL MULES!



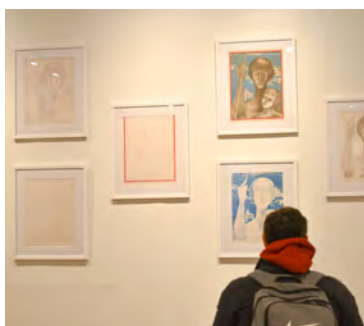
## IN THIS ISSUE:



### NEWS

SGA outlines plans for the spring semester.

**read more on page 3**



### ARTS & CULTURE

"The Woman Who Says No" debuts in Martin Art Gallery.

**read more on page 6**

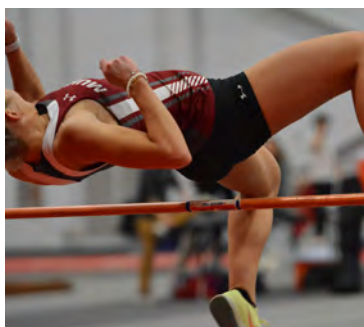
### BINGO

1	27	33	48	75
8	19	45	56	61
3	18	FREE SPACE	49	69
15	26	41	53	66
2	21	37	46	65

### OP/ED

2023 'Berg predictions--will you get BINGO?

**read more on page 8**



### SPORTS

Muhlenberg's track program breaks records.

**read more on page 10**

## 'Berg is back with their campus-wide Lunar New Year festivities



PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Xindy Wu '26 celebrates Lunar New Year!

By SHAIYAN FEISAL  
STAFF WRITER

Jan. 22, 2023 was the start of the year of the rabbit and the cat, and Muhlenberg held an abundance of activities to celebrate Lunar New Year from Jan. 24-26. Students were able to participate in dumpling making, eat a special Lunar New Year dinner at Wood Dining Commons, stuff their own rabbit or cat stuff-a-plush, play casino games and more.

Raja Darain Khan '25, president of the Asian Student Association (ASA) said that the term Lunar New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, "can be seen in its literal or metaphorical meaning where literally it refers to the cycles of the moon whereas metaphorically it refers to paying homage to your ancestors and your family and paying your respects to the past."

The ASA and International

Student Association (ISA) started collaborating on designing the events for the Lunar New Year celebration at the end of the fall 2022 semester. Khan stated that "a [planning] committee was formed with people from varying Asian cultures to better represent how people celebrate the Lunar New Year across Asia with members of ASA, ISA, and the overall student body serving on it voluntarily."

Starting on Jan. 24, dining services hosted a dumpling making event. According to the General Manager of Dining Services John Pasquarello, "over 50 students participated in a Muhlenberg tradition, our annual Dumpling Fest where more than 1,600 dumplings were made in the Red Door Catering Kitchen in Seegers Union under the supervision of our culinary team including Han Ho Wang from the Wood Dining Commons, Executive Catering Chef Anthony Onorata and Ca-

tering Director Jenell Butz. We were happy to partner with Tom Janis, the Director of Muhlenberg College International Support for this annual event, and we served over 1,000 students for dinner that night, it was amazing." On Jan. 26, the Wood Dining Commons also featured specialty menu items including Lion's Head Soup, Asian bris-ket, an Asian tofu bar, steamed dumplings, vegetable fried rice and mochi.

A cultural panel was held on Jan. 25 where Muhlenberg students were able to share their traditions about how they honor Lunar New Year. The participants in this year's panel included Xindy Wu '26, Roy Hsu '24, Chau Dinh '24 and Fuka Aizawa '26. Wu shared an amusing story about one Lunar New Year when she was in elementary school. "I remember one time I went to Chinatown in New York City as a kid. One of the traditions was

to make really loud noises, such as banging on pans or drum-like structures. What the kids would do is get party poppers and they would throw them on the ground, step on them, and it would make noise immediately on impact. One time I brought these party poppers to school. Some of them fell on the ground and when students stepped on them it made really loud noises. My teacher was mad and said that there would be consequences for the person who brought the party poppers, but she never realized that it was me."

When Wu was asked about stories that have been passed down from her family, she explained the story behind why red is frequently used during Lunar New Year. She stated that "There was a village that was ransacked every year by a monster. This monster would ruin

**SEE NEW YEAR PAGE 4**



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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The Muhlenberg Weekly strives for accuracy in reporting and writing, but we acknowledge that mistakes happen. Readers are invited to submit corrections about errors in articles, and they should be submitted to weeklyeditor@gmail.com. Corrections are also brought to our staff's attention by our own editors and writers. Our staff will review the suggested correction, consult with the author of the article, and issue the appropriate correction. Online corrections are located at the bottom of the article. Print corrections are located within the paper, on the page indicated in the online edition. However, The Weekly does not grant take-down requests for articles.

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We request that advertising material be submitted by the Monday preceding publication at 5 p.m. If materials have not been received at that time, the advertisement will not run and the advertiser is still responsible for 100% payment. We reserve the right to decline any advertisement that is misleading, inaccurate, fraudulent, or deemed generally unacceptable. This determination will be made by the Business Staff in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief. The Muhlenberg Weekly maintains a distinction between its news & editorial content and advertising. As such, advertisements will not be accepted if they imitate the general style of The Weekly, intentionally or unintentionally. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: headlines, bylines, fonts, and column-arrangements. In order to make this distinction, The Weekly also reserves the right to include the word "advertisement" on any advertisement that is deemed too native.

# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

1/10/23  
Vandalism—There was a report of vandalism to a chair, exit sign and ceiling tiles in Prosser Hall. The investigation is ongoing.

1/16/23  
DUI—In the Trexler parking lots there was a report of an individual driving under the influence. The Allentown Police Department responded and took the individual into custody with no further incident.

1/18/23  
Parking—Report of an illegally parked car with excessive tickets in the Walz lot. The vehicle was removed from campus.

1/20/23  
Liquor Law—There was a report of an alcohol violation at East Hall. Cetronia EMS transported the student to the hospital.  
Hit and Run—There was a report of a hit and run in the Prosser parking lot causing damage to a bumper. There are no suspects at this time.

1/23/23  
Theft—There was a report of shoplifting at Seegers Union. The individuals were spoken to with no further incident.

1/24/23  
Suspicious Person—There was a report of a suspicious person at the Village. They were identified and spoken to with no further incident.

1/26/23  
Elevator Problem—An individual was stuck in the elevator at Martin Luther Hall. Allentown Fire Department responded and rescued the student. Plant Operations was notified to fix the issue.  
Parking—Report of an illegally parked car with tickets at the 26th and Chew street parking lot. The vehicle was removed from campus.

1/27/23  
Alarm—There was a fire alarm at 2201 Chew street. The system was silenced and reset.

1/28/23  
Traffic—There was a report of a disabled vehicle with a flat tire on Chew and 23rd street. There was no further incident.  
Point of Information—Campus Safety was dispatched to Seegers Union to assist plant operations in removing a lock from a locker.  
Theft—There was a report of the possible theft of Adirondack chairs. Nothing could be noted at the time and the investigation is ongoing.  
Medical—There was a report of an injured student at Brown Hall. MC EMS responded and the student refused further treatment.

# Celebrate Valentine's Day on Campus!



Red Door Catering is offering fresh baked desserts from the on-campus bakery as well as upscale, heat & ready dinner entrees. Surprise your sweetheart with something special right here on campus!



Scan the QR Code & order by Feb 10th





# SGA springs into the spring semester!

BY SAMANTHA TEMPKIN  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Muhlenberg's Student Government Association (SGA) is bringing back past events and initiatives as well as establishing new ones for this semester. According to the Muhlenberg website, "The Student Government Association is responsible for coordinating the representation of the student body on all institutional, faculty, ad hoc and Board of Trustee committees." They are expected to be a resource for both student organizations and individual students, to enhance student engagement, to advocate for marginalized identities and to be the voice of the student body overall. SGA's executive officers, internal committees and representatives all work together to make this happen.

"As treasurer, my personal goals are to spread awareness of the support SGA is capable of giving to organizations through funding," says Evan Lipman '24. Just like last semester, clubs can acquire funding on a request basis by filling out a Student Club and Organization Request for Expense, or a SCORE form. Once this is submitted, the Finance Committee decides whether or not to provide funding with help from SGA. Lipman continues, "I feel that often clubs have great ideas, but don't pursue them because they feel the financial obstacles are too great. I want clubs to feel they can pursue these ideas and that SGA will help them in any way they can."

Last year's "Tens Across the Board," a ballroom vogue culture-inspired dance event was a major success as it worked to empower the voices of those who have been historically marginalized in spaces



PHOTO BY EMMA BRAM '24

Students take a snowy stroll to their classes.

such as Muhlenberg all while promoting inclusivity by educating about several cultural practices. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Chair Matt McCray '24, who was behind much of this event's success, is continuing his efforts to throw events that will amplify marginalized voices. Not only will SGA be throwing a second "Tens Across the Board" due to the response it received from the student body, but is also scheduled to throw its second annual Mule Mitzvah in collaboration with Hillel in a couple of weeks. This will be a celebration modeled after bar/bat mitzvah parties and is yet another event meant to promote inclusivity on

campus.

McCray gave the inside scoop regarding more DEIB events, saying "We have our Wild 'N Out event which is in its finalization phase as we speak. We are bringing two well-known Black comedians that are a part of a show on MTV. This event is in collaboration with Men of Color Network, as we are continuing to push the agenda of collaboration with marginalized individuals and identities on campus... We will have our Diversity Dinner towards the end of the semester as a final celebration in regards to all diversity advances and work we have done thus far throughout the entire year. We

plan to get a special guest speaker for the event as well."

Other initiatives include teaming up with Chief Diversity Officer of Muhlenberg Brooke Vick, Ph.D., to facilitate DEIB training, as well as working with the Office of Multicultural Life and other student affinity groups.

In addition to helping plan campus events and leading fundraising training, Vice President Olivia Tebsherany '23 cites the organization's upcoming Ambassador Program as the one she is most excited for in terms of engagement between SGA and students. "Pioneered by our Recording Secretary Jake Forstein ['24], the Ambassador Program will delegate SGA representatives to every Muhlenberg student organization on campus so we can have open conversations with student leaders and what they're looking for from SGA," she shared. "We'll be rolling out the program within the next coming weeks, and I for one am so excited about it."

Tebsherany '23 is also responsible for moderating General Assembly meetings and chairing the Standards Committee that amends the organization's bylaws. These responsibilities allow Tebsherany to provide insight regarding a range of SGA's goals and ideas for the upcoming semester. She emphasizes how students are not only allowed but highly encouraged to attend both General Assembly meetings and committee meetings. Tebsherany says, "I want to make General Assembly the most welcoming, informative and engaging environment that I can. I would love to see more and more Muhlenberg students at General Assembly each week—answering questions, listening to feedback and providing information are all key facets to being strong representatives and advocates."

## 'Berg's externship program resurfaces once again

BY MATTHEW BARESH  
NEWS EDITOR

This past winter break brought a unique opportunity for students to further their career exploration. The externship program, hosted by the Career Center on campus, featured 49 students who completed externships at 26 different job sites, 23 of which were with alumni. During the program, students traveled to the work sites, shadowed the professional for the day, and had the ability to ask questions and network with other co-workers. "This program serves as a resource for students to try out new careers and industries before fully committing to plans or accepting more permanent positions. It allows for our students to explore their passions and gain more clarity on their professional goals so they can have a successful future," shared Jessica Deemer, assistant director of experiential learning and main coordinator for the program.

While internships focus on students having a hands-on role in their tasks, externships focus solely on observing the host. "Unlike internships, an externship is a short term, 1-5 day experience based off of job shadowing and observation," noted Deemer. "Externships are low commitment, low risk and free! In order to secure the internship or job that is right for you, you need to know what type of work environment you thrive in, along with what type of work best suits you. Externships are the most hands-on way to discover what path is right for you before fully committing."

Muhlenberg's externship program primarily included job sites along the East Coast for the sake of convenience. "To be specific, these 23 alumni hosts were from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Virginia. These hosts come from a variety of industries, including: Non-profit/Social Services, Health Professions/Services,



PHOTO COURTESY OF ESTHER SCHLOSSBERG '20

Or-Ei Ankori '25, E. Stazja Stuccio '20, Esther Schlossberg '20, Melissa Borker '22, and Esther Klinger '25 inside the InSTRIDE mobile health unit during their externship experience.

Theater Education, Education and Higher Education, Government & Law, Business & Finance, Performing Arts, Music & Composition, Communications/Marketing and STEM," Deemer explained.

Many students reflected positively on their experience with their hosts. Matthew DeGirolamo '24 completed his ex-

SEE **EXTERNSHIP** PAGE 4



# Muhlenberg celebrates THAW

BY MATTHEW KLINGER  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Ten years ago, Muhlenberg held its first Toast Heard Around the World (THAW) for students and alumni to celebrate the College and each other. Recognizing that not all alumni could regularly return to Muhlenberg, 'Berg wanted a way to bring Muhlenberg to them. Ten years later, that tradition lives on, as Muhlenberg celebrated its 10th annual THAW on Thursday, Jan. 19. In addition to alumni hosting events in their respective cities, a student THAW was also held on campus.

This year's student THAW was themed "THAW at the Casino." The casino was held in the Muhlenberg Light Lounge where students could enjoy free food and drinks, entertainment, prizes, a photo booth and a performance by Renee Audrey '22. During the course of the celebration, students were encouraged to write out everything they loved about 'Berg on big posters to win an extra raffle ticket. THAW also allowed the Muhlenberg community to gather to celebrate the College and demonstrated what Mules can accomplish when they come together, and over 250 students attended. Multiple college departments and student organizations came together to run the event including the Muhlenberg Activities Council, the Office of Alumni Affairs, 'Berg Productions and the Cardinal Key Society. Student THAW included six student hosts—Dylan De Magistris '24, Sydney Holliday '23, Sam Brown '23, Britney Jara '23, Jacob Swartz '23 and Allison Mintz '23—who replicated what an alumni host might do for a THAW event by helping with planning, entertainment, promotion and holding toasts to Muhlenberg throughout the night.

Brown shared "I loved being a student host! I think that my favorite part had



PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS.

Hosts Dylan De Magistris '24, Jacob Swartz '23, Sydney Holliday '23, Britney Jara '23, and Sam Brown '23 celebrate Muhlenberg College through THAW, an event to connect past and present Muhlenberg students.

to be working with the other incredible emcees, they're all such big personalities and did an amazing job making sure the event was a success. I took [being a student host] as an amazing opportunity to give back to the College that's given me so much these past four years!"

For students that may have missed this year's celebration or are unfamiliar with student THAW, Director of Alumni Affairs Brad Ludwig says that the most important things to know are that "student THAW is always a fun kickoff to the semester and is open and free to all

students... [another] really big takeaway is that while student THAW is always so much fun, the fun doesn't end after you graduate!"

Alumni festivities were not limited to the Light Lounge. One of the best parts of THAW is its ability to bring Mules together worldwide, and this year was no different. This year's events spanned the country and the continent, with 94 alumni volunteers hosting 54 THAW events from New Jersey to California to Jamaica. Alumni were encouraged to take pictures of their toasts and celebrations and send

them to the Office of Alumni Affairs so they could be compiled into this year's folder documenting the celebrations.

Davis Miller '24 commented saying, "I thought it was pretty cool how there were casino games. Overall, it was enjoyable, and [I] would go again next year."

Students who are interested in being a student host or volunteer next year are encouraged to reach out to Jessika Parra in the Alumni Affairs office at [jessikaparra@muhlenberg.edu](mailto:jessikaparra@muhlenberg.edu).

## FROM NEW YEAR PAGE 1

the crops and destroy everything. One year, a villager started to use loud noises, and put up red flags and banners to ward off the monster. As the villagers started doing these things yearly, these are now examples of typical festivities that happen during Lunar New Year."

Jan. 26 was celebration night at 'Berg. 'Berg students had the opportunity to play casino games such as blackjack and the traditional South Korean game Ddakji where one player tries to make the other player's paper flip over on the floor. Other activities included a "make and take section" where students could undertake calligraphy and paper cutting, and have the chance to win raffle baskets. Furthermore, red envelopes were also distributed that included a card explaining what a lucky money gift is. The card states that a "Lucky money gift is a monetary gift given during holidays such as New Year in many Asian countries. It is symbolized to expel evil forces and generate good luck for the entire year and is usually given out to the younger generation who are normally still in school or unmarried."

Muhlenberg's K-pop club performed

"Fancy" by TWICE, "Into the New World" by Girls' Generation and "Love Dive" by IVE. Samantha Tempkin '25, president of the K-pop club, talked about preparing for the Lunar New Year celebration. She said that "since the semester just started, we haven't had too much time to learn new dances, so these are all dances that we learned last semester that we thought would be great to bring to the Lunar New Year Event. We had two rehearsals before our Lunar New Year performance as a refresher! It was really fun getting back into the swing of things and we can't wait to learn more dances and perform them for more events like this!"

Celebration night came to a close with a karaoke event. Overall, thanks to careful planning by students and staff members, the College was able to successfully commemorate Lunar New Year and teach students the traditions and activities typical of Lunar New Year.

## FROM EXTERNSHIP PAGE 3

ternship with the president and owner of Monmouth & Ocean County Awning. "This externship definitely exceeded my expectations," said DeGirolamo. "Going into it, I was expecting a program centered around specific, technical skills and tools involving accounting and marketing. While I did learn about those topics, the interaction between myself and Mr. Zatorski mostly found its roots within leadership. This proved to be a much more fruitful result than what I believe I would have gathered if we had just focused on strict technical skills."

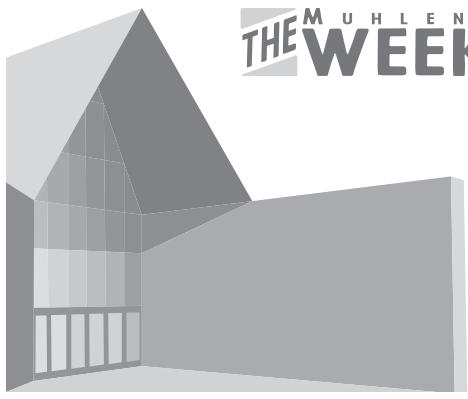
Juliana Sims '25 shadowed a pediatric dentist and practice owner as a part of the program. "Before participating in this externship, I shadowed a few general dentists as well as a dentist involved in geriatrics so learning about pediatrics was enticing. In the end, this externship was extremely rewarding because I gained both an incredible relationship with Dr. Verga as well as a new appreciation for the importance of setting children up for an entire lifetime of healthy dental care."

"Going into my day of shadowing I wasn't really sure what to expect," com-

mented Victoria Jordan '25 who completed two externships, one with a chief of pediatric ophthalmology and ocular genetics and another with a national director of clinical excellence. "Due to it being an office job it did not seem appealing to me, but I wanted to see the behind the scenes of a health business [which is the] reason why I ended up applying. I am very glad I did because the environment was nothing like I thought it would be. I am very grateful that Mr. Polk was willing to give me such an amazing opportunity."

Following the overwhelming success of the program, Deemer is optimistic for the future of the program and the value it provides for students and hosts alike. "I am very excited to grow this program over the next few years! My ultimate goal for this program is to increase accessibility so that all students have the opportunity to participate in an externship."





“We need to focus on bringing our best, not worrying about what anyone else is bringing.”

- Blanca Rodriguez-Evangelista, “Pose”

# First Peak Film Festival premieres

By ALMARAH URMAN  
STAFF WRITER

On Nov. 18 and 19, Muhlenberg’s media and communication department, along with the newly reformed Muhlenberg Film Association (MFA), put on their first film festival in over a decade. This was done in collaboration with the Allentown Civic Theatre, and the 12 films selected were shown over the course of two days.

Beyond some invited submissions, all the films were produced entirely by current or recently graduated students. Many of them were made by media and communication students during their time in Dublin, Ireland while studying abroad.

“Selecting the films for the festival was a long and hard process. There were so many submissions and I wish we could’ve screened them all, but we had to make informed decisions about what we wanted our festival to say and what kind of impact we wanted to have,” remarked Amira Jackson, ‘24, one of the student coordinators of the event.

“I personally really enjoyed getting to see all the student films that I had never gotten a chance to see before this, it also allowed me to judge them unbiasedly... I also really enjoyed doing the publicity for the film festival and creating the programs was so much fun for me,” said Kayla Rivera ‘23, another coordinator.

“The planning that went into this event turned out to be quite a lot of work. We would meet at least once a week to discuss general things and make sure we could achieve what we wanted to... Without that



PHOTO COURTESY OF JACOB SWARTZ '23

“Dust on the Lens” by Jake Weisblatt, Jacob Swartz, and Max Rose ‘23 won Best Cinematography at the MFA Film Festival.

teamwork, this would have been so much harder... Later on, it became more about getting things done in a crunch which we were able to do. Getting the films, programs and awards ready in time was a lot of work but was a great time in the end. We all kept each other in check and made sure things were getting done, which they always were,” said the third coordinator, Joe Romano, ‘23.

The festival was a competition, and the film that walked away with the most awards, including best fiction film, was “Bombshell” which was based on the complex relationship between a pair of sisters.

“The idea for the script was based off of a loose, dramatized version of my real-life relationship with my sister. I really wanted to write something about the complex relationships siblings have with each other; I think it’s such an in-

teresting dynamic that so many people can relate to. From there me, Mallory [Goldsmith ‘22] and Arielle [Weinberger ‘22] all worked together to work out the kinks in the script in order to get our final version.” explained alum Maggie Mustion ‘22, director, writer and co-producer along with Goldsmith and Weinberger.

Ruhani Singh ‘23 and Sarah Bui ‘23, who took home the best documentary award for their film “Mair” said, “After spending a lot of time in Dublin and other cities in Ireland, we were strongly impressed by the reading culture. Irish people read everywhere: on the bus, in the park and even in the pub. People really enjoy reading. There are so many independent bookshops that have been present for a few decades in Ireland. So we started wondering what makes these bookshops alive and how these bookshops nurture people’s love for reading and literature.

We were not trying to make a documentary but wanted to focus more on sharing the stories and memories of people’s relationships with these bookshops as these bookshops are slowly disappearing. The idea was trying to resemble the process of reading a book which opens a whole world for one’s imagination. The drawings, collages, different images [and] imaginative characters are brought together to help build up that world.”

Of course, the packed audience’s reactions to the films were one of the most exciting things about the festival, a sentiment shared by the teams of all 12 films during the festival talkback and award acceptance speeches as well as later statements. When the showings concluded, chatter about the projects was heard from the various groups walking back to Muhlenberg.

“I thought all the films were amazing in their own way. They all evoked different emotions as well. There were some that were like ‘haha funny’ and others that were deep reflections on the self. They were all wonderful... that was my first time viewing any film work in a theater since before COVID!” said Ryan Steremberg, ‘25.

“I’m not a film major... but walking in to sit together and see this art was so special to me. I was just really moved by what just happened in there, and I would love to see this happen again,” mused Sabrina Vitale, ‘23, as she walked out of the theater.

The First Peak Film Festival was a massive success, showcasing some truly incredible student film work to a full Civic Theatre audience.

## Jakeim Hart’s ‘16 unexpected journey to Broadway

By KATHERINE CONLON  
CO-NEWS EDITOR

Jakeim Hart ‘16 was just 10 years old when he entered into the world of theater. As a young boy from Long Island, just having moved to a new town in Virginia, he tripped out for the basketball team to gain a sense of community and make new friends. “They’re really cut-throat down there,” explained Hart, going in-depth about the results when the hunt for community did not go to plan. So, he decided to audition for the musical. Hart noted that “I’d been used to singing and playing stuff in front of people. So, it wasn’t that far of a leap for me. So I just did the audition and got the part and I’ve been doing it ever since.”

When the time came for Hart to choose where he would be attending college,

Muhlenberg became a viable option due in part to the large sum of scholarship money and the encouragement of former head of the theatre department and professor emeritus Charlie Richter. Hart packed up his bags and headed to Allentown.

Hart describes Associate Professor of Theatre Troy Dwyer’s production of “Romeo and Juliet” as a pivotal moment in his Muhlenberg career. Hart performed in and composed music for the play and describes the impact of the experience, saying, “I’ve been trying to chase that feeling in my professional life. It was just a very encouraging environment and very artistically fulfilling and I felt like I unlocked something within myself that I just previously hadn’t done before.”

Out of college, Hart went on to pursue acting as his career. Prior to COVID-19

decimating the theater industry and taking away the livelihood of individuals working in the field, Hart was performing in a musical known as “Sing Street” which was set to transfer to Broadway. “Sing Street” was scrapped at the time as a result of the pandemic and Hart described the period following this as “two years of nothing.” Hart outlined the toll the pandemic took on him saying, “[I] was trying to figure out what else I have to offer the world besides singing and acting and playing music for people.”

Then, “Almost Famous” came along. Originally, Hart auditioned for the role of the lead guitarist in the play’s fictitious band. After not hearing back for several months from the casting team and his father passing away at around the same time, Hart was ready to give up. “It was a really dark point in my life and I didn’t

really want to do anything with music, or art or theater just because it made me really sad,” said Hart.

However, in this very bleak moment, Hart received an email that would change his life’s trajectory. The higher-ups at “Almost Famous” had cast the role Hart originally auditioned for; however, the part of the conniving band manager and the understudy for the part of the guitarist was still up for grabs and they were interested in Hart taking on the job. After a short audition process, Hart booked the role.

On a final note, Hart shared a kernel of advice for Muhlenberg students who are considering taking on a career in the acting industry. Hart stated that “if you were meant to be doing this, stick through it through the good times, and the bad.”



# “Reset: New Dances” brings new works to the stage

*Student-choreographers collaborate with dancers to create a unique performance.*

BY JOHNNY VEGLIA  
CO-ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

The Baker Theatre delighted audience members this past weekend with “Reset: New Dances,” featuring works from 10 student choreographers who each highlighted their own unique artistic style and expressions of movement. “It was a glorious show that compelled me and kept me hooked from the first show to the last,” stated Ava Duskic ‘23, an audience member.

The choreographers were given full independence in developing their pieces and the themes they would like to highlight in collaboration with the over 50 dancers and other members of the creative and production team. Assistant Professor of Dance Natalie Gotter, the artistic director for the show, mentioned in the program, “Throughout the process, we have been asking ourselves, What does a reset look like?... As this generation of dancers grapples with questions of equity, care, labor and storytelling, I have been touched, inspired and deeply proud of the work and conversations that are being raised by these choreographers.” Marissa Cohen ‘25 served as the assistant artistic director for the pieces.

“I was given full freedom throughout the semester to embark on my own creative journey with the guidance of artistic director Natalie Gotter and my dance professors Randall Anthony Smith, Heidi Cruz-Austin and Robyn Watson. Although the theme of the show was ‘Reset,’ each of us choreographers interpreted the prompt in our own ways and we were able to pursue our artistic visions, wherever they took us,” stated Claire Spenard ‘23.

Spenard explored the idea of childhood and playfulness of toy soldiers with a physical representation of these props in her piece, “At Play.” The piece featured AnnaMaria Fernandez ‘24 and Amy Staphorst ‘24 with Spenard dancing as



“RESET: New Dances” highlighted student choreographers and their exploration of grief, capitalism, and other significant topics.

well due to health reasons for one of her dancers. Staphorst shared, “This piece felt like we found the movement first and then used our training to inform the movement and clarify it for the audience.”

“The process working with [Spenard] was one of the most collaborative and—for lack of a better word—ethnographic experiences I’ve had here at Muhlenberg,” stated Fernandez. “She had a really clear idea in mind and worked with us and our understanding of it to make it come to life.”

“The most rewarding part of the process was when my dancers felt juiced about the piece or excited to bring an idea to the table. When my dancers latched on to the work and felt connected to it in their own way this is when I felt the most rewarded. It’s one thing to have a vision on your own but to share it with other invested artists is a gift,” stated Spenard.

The collaborative process was also extended with other choreographers and dancers throughout the creative process, all of whom had the ability to make consequential creative decisions.

“We made decisions about the story/theme, costumes, music and lighting while choreographing the whole thing on top of that. It was a lot of decision making but it was the first time I had ever been in charge of putting together something like this,” stated Riley Hammett ‘23, the choreographer of “Miles Unraveled.”

“Rehearsals with Riley were a space for positivity, good vibes, collaboration and support. Tap dance can be a difficult learning and creating process because filling up an eight count for a modern dance could be a prep and a turn, in tap dance, you could be making 20 sounds. [Hammett] definitely used that ability to fill up an eight-count with sound, making the dance really challenging but amazing,” stated Erika Dubin ‘23, a dancer in “Miles Unraveled.”

Head theatre technician Paul Theisen crafted the lighting design for the show in collaboration with the choreographers. Kiana Grella ‘23 served as the costume designer for the piece and allowed for the stories and themes of each piece to be represented while still making the clothing flexible for dancers and movement.

Dancers were able to be in multiple pieces as well and experience different movements based on each choreographer and their artistic process. The only central guideline for the show was the name “Reset.”

“The choreographic process for both the pieces I performed in were really unique and special in their own ways, especially because they were two completely different movement qualities,” stated Molly Layden ‘24. “Each cast was really special to me as well.” Layden participated in Hammett’s piece along with Ruthy Freeberg’s ‘23 piece “Loved Out of Being.”

Leanna Niesen ‘24 was the production stage manager and described how the process was exciting for them thanks to the new opportunity of being a dance stage manager.

“My process as the production stage manager of ‘Reset’ was really amazing and rewarding. I have never worked on a dance show before so it was very new for me... I would say probably the biggest challenge doing this show as opposed to other shows I’ve done was just the size of it. We had such a huge cast, we had more than fifty dancers working on the show and just keeping track of all those people and their conflicts and all of that was definitely a challenge for me, but it was also really rewarding for me, especially as a dance major myself. Getting to work with other dance students and getting to work with other choreographers was really fantastic,” stated Niesen.

Layden concluded, “Getting to see all of the hard work of the choreographers and dancers come to life was absolutely incredible, especially seeing them evolve each night of tech, as well as over the semester’s worth of rehearsals. Every single piece was so dynamic and exciting and so individual to each choreographer, you could really see each of them shine through in the movement.”

## Studios debut with three student-run productions

BY DANNY MILKIS, IAN CLARK & JOHNNY VEGLIA  
A&C TEAM

The Muhlenberg Theatre Association (MTA) premiered the fall 2022 Studio Production season from Nov. 17-20 in the Studio Theatre. The season featured three unique shows, with all aspects of production commandeered and executed by students.

The MTA produced its second full-length musical theater piece, “tick, tick... BOOM,” directed by Brayden Stallman ‘23, music directed by Bethany Qian ‘25 and choreographed by Amelie Parczany ‘24.

The musical tells the story of composer Jonathan Larson as he navigates life as an artist in New York City, longing to be recognized for creating something

groundbreaking.

Director Brayden Stallman ‘23 explains, “I chose this show because I’m struggling with approaching a milestone in my life just like Jon is in the play, and what comforts him is that ‘his friends are there too.’ That’s really something that felt like a huge part of this process for me.”

“One of the highlights of working on ‘tick tick... BOOM’ was being surrounded by such an incredible team that I could not have done the project without,” continued Stallman. “My creative team, my cast, my design team, the MTA production team—there are way too many people to mention. They all brought so much joy and love to the project.”

One of the other shows put on in the festival was Qui Nguyen’s “She Kills Monsters,” directed by Connor McCully ‘23. The show tells the story of Agnes Evans,

mourning the sudden death of her family, and posthumously connecting with her sister, Tilly, through a fantastical adventure within Tilly’s Dungeons & Dragons notes.

Piper Woods ‘23, who played Evil Gabbi in the show, commented that, “This show was one of the most technically complex I have ever worked on, period... None of my previous projects required this amount of emotional upkeep. ‘She Kills’ is a tough show to go through. There is a lot of violence, both physical and mental, but the cast really held everyone up so even the tough moments were softened a bit.”

Woods’ comment rings true. From dragon heads, to magic missile blasts, or even gelatinous cubes, “She Kills Monsters” is nothing short of a behemoth of a show to put on and a challenge that this cast and crew were ripe to take on.

The show featured intense and complex battles, choreographed by McCully, that heightened the show’s fantastical and comedic elements even further.

Lilli Brown ‘23, who played Vera, said “She Kills Monsters” was an extremely technologically and logistically challenging show to produce. The director, cast and crew did an excellent job managing all the elements of this show. One of my favorite parts of the show was the costumes, which were all hand made by our costume designer [Katie Harris ‘24].”

“I couldn’t have asked for a better production to have as my introduction into college theater. I’ve been doing theatre since I was four years old, and I’ve never worked with a more amazing cast, crew and creative team and I’m incredibly proud of our run,” said Meg Trageser ‘25

SEE **STUDIOS** PAGE 7



# 'Berg students hit the runway

## SGA celebrates ball culture with Tens Across the Board.

BY IAN CLARK  
ASSISTANT A&C EDITOR

Earlier this week, on Sunday, Dec. 4, the Event Space was alive with music and cheers as Tens Across the Board, an event hosted by the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB) Committee of the Student Government Association (SGA) in partnership with Queer & Trans People of Color Collective (QTPOCC) was well underway.

Tens Across the Board is an event that honors and celebrates ball culture, a subset of LGBTQ+ culture popular among Black and Latinx people. Ball culture has a lot of similarities to drag culture, featuring gender as the main form of performance and a heavy emphasis on costumes and dance, specifically featuring a form of dance called 'voguing' that is characterized by poses performed in rapid succession to music. Ball culture became popularized around the 60s in New York City and gained more traction throughout the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

As chair of the DEI&B Committee, Matthew McCray '24 has the mindset of creating "events, programs, and activities that truly give all students of Muhlenberg the opportunity to embrace their true pride and be celebrated for it." With this in mind, he started planning Tens Across the Board, beginning the process by "having conversations with local members of the Vogue community, in order to honor the ballroom culture for what it truly is. The DEI&B Committee made sure to create categories that were best suitable and inclusive for Muhlenberg's community."

The turnout for the event was incredible with many people showing up and



Joey Marcacci '23 strikes a pose.

walking for the different categories like Alien Superstar, Catwalk, Spins/Dips, Hands, Hair, Duckwalk, Elegance and many more.

Amira Jackson '24, an attendee and participant in the event said, "This event was much needed on this campus, especially for queer and LGBTQ+ students of color. To be in a space led by an MC and judges of color, it created something illuminating and beautiful. Everyone was accepted how they came and there was a wonderful sense of support in the room that night."

Like McCray's initial vision, Tens Across the Board was a completely supportive environment, especially for students that are not as familiar with ball culture. The event gave a firsthand per-

spective into this subculture and an opportunity for people to learn more about it head-on by walking and for many also helped support their self-image and confidence too.

Another member of the DEI&B committee, Kris Jimenez '26, talked about this saying, "It was definitely a nerve-racking experience to get out of your comfort zone and walk in front of so many people but my friends were there to watch me and hype me up so as soon as I got on that floor, I knew it was time to shine and I definitely did!"

Jolie Lanning '25, another participant, discussed her experience with Tens Across the Board, "The energy was absolutely amazing. Originally I wasn't going to walk because I've never done anything

like it before, but after seeing the first few categories I decided to just go for it. I'm so glad I did because I had so much fun. I felt beautiful, powerful, sexy and just so at home in my body. I really hope they do it again next semester."

Enjoyment in the event wasn't regulated only to participants, people who were just there to watch thoroughly enjoyed the experience as well. Attendee Mustafa Hall '23 said, "It's always a pleasure and privilege to be in spaces where Queerness and Queer joy is celebrated and honored. I loved watching different people I didn't expect to walk in a category perform. And I also loved seeing how everyone interpreted each specific category. It was an honor to be there and I hope this event becomes a Muhlenberg tradition."

Co-leader of QTPOCC, Gio Merrifield '23 spoke about his experience as a judge during the event, "I was really surprised with the turnout... I really hope that this event happens year after year after year. It's always lovely having LGBTQIA+ events on campus showcasing our uniqueness and our beauty in so many different ways! I want to thank Matt McCray for inviting myself and Maria Rivera ['23] as we are co-leaders of QTPOCC to be a part of this event. I feel truly honored."

McCray saw the overwhelming love and support from the event and commented, "DEI&B Committee is proud to announce that there will be a second Tens Across the Board event next semester, so be on the lookout for dates and categories. DEI&B will continue to create spaces, conversations and environments that are inclusive to all and create active community change and celebration."

FROM **STUDIOS** PAGE 6

who played Kalliope.

Brown continued with a memory of the show about the song "Linger" by The Cranberries, "The cast adapted the song as our own little anthem and whenever we needed to get each other's attention during rehearsal or elsewhere one of us would start singing the song."

"There's something about student-produced theater that is so special and rewarding to work on... 'She Kills Monsters' is a play so full of heart, and I can only hope the Muhlenberg community took something away from our show," concluded Trageser.

The last of the three shows for the Studios season included "God of Carnage" by Yasmina Reza, directed by Joey Marcacci '23 and assistant directed by Eben Cornine '23. The play focused on the story of four adults coming together to discuss an incident that occurred between their sons, but the true nature of the parents would come to showcase how they are the children themselves, metaphorically. It's a story about privilege, hurt, isolation and the lack of what people know.

The scenic design by Levi Roush '24 utilized bright colors in the set of orange, red, blue and more to bring a playground aesthetic to this ordinary living room.

Roush was also responsible for a vomit contraption.

"The vomit contraption was a journey but working with my scenic designer [Roush] and my assistant director [Cornine], it made the process a lot smoother. It just took trial and error, and a lot of clean up," stated Marcacci.

Meghan McGorry '23, who portrayed Annette Raleigh, mentioned, "I was surprisingly really excited about getting the chance to puke onstage, and it was actually a very technical process that required a lot of choreography and practice before the performances. Everyone was really great throughout the process though, and it was really enjoyable."

In addition to the fake vomit, the rest of the experience went well and allowed for a collaborative environment between the actors, designers and other members of the production team. McGorry also mentioned, "It was genuinely such a joy to go to rehearsal and create with everyone."

Marcacci continued, "The creative process for studios was structured well by the MTA and they gave me the resources I needed in order to be successful. Studios went very well and I had few issues with the whole process."



The cast of Tick Tick Boom performing "Sunday."

The production stage manager of the show, Hannah Cohen '25, stated, "'God of Carnage' was such an amazing experience. I got to work with seniors who I hadn't met before. The best part was probably working with the design team to prepare set, lighting, sound and costumes. From the longest cue ever to the disgusting vomit, from the obnoxious phone sounds

to the carefully chosen outfits, the design team put together an amazing show. The actors really took on their roles too. Each night they improvised a little bit more, making it serious yet funny at the same time. I loved working on this show and I can't wait to see what's next for all of us!"



# Not Your Grandmother’s Bingo Game

By Lily Magoon  
Assistant Op/Ed Editor

If you’ve ever been told your own crazy story by someone you’ve never met, or had a friend of a friend find out the guy you’re seeing is going to break things off before you do, you might be a Muhlenberg student. It’s no secret that this campus is small, but the fact that information spreads faster than frat flu can make it downright claustrophobic. But, you have to admit the constant stream of gossip can be fun—at least when it isn’t about you. So, why not make the best of it?

The saying, “this was not on my 2022 bingo card,” became increasingly popular during the last few months of the year, but for 2023, the saying has made the jump from metaphor to reality. TikTok is full of people walking us through their actual physical 2023 bingo cards, mostly consisting of possible political and pop-culture events that match the ludicrous energy of the past few years. There are also some people making predictions about the people in their day-to-day lives. These are not nearly as publicized, usually kept between a small circle of friends or roommates, and predict everything from new aesthetics, to friend drama, to devastating breakups.

As we all know, ‘Berg loves bingo. And really, in a place like Muhlenberg, where truly nothing is private, it’d be a wasted opportunity not to make one. So, consider this your guide to crafting your own game of Muhlenberg Bingo.

The first step to a good spring semester bingo card is the group of friends you make it with, and the more the merrier.

You also have to choose where to display it—because a Muhlenberg Bingo Card demands to be seen (although you might want to hide it when certain people come over, depending on its content). If you’ve been blessed with artistic talent, then the sky’s the limit when it comes to design, but the rest of us can get by perfectly fine with sticky notes and Sharpies. A bingo card traditionally has 24 numbered spaces, and the all-important “Free Space” in the center. Now, you could just label it “Free Space,” but where’s the fun in that? Instead, pick something you’re one-hundred percent sure will happen. These might be specific planned events, such as sack day or something involving stuff-a-plush, or just things that happen a lot here, like the internet going out or getting an email reminder to use the lockers in the DST.

Once you have your group, your materials, and your “Free Space” decided, the options are endless. The trick is to have an even distribution of: things you want to happen, crazy things that probably won’t happen but technically could, and thinly veiled insults. There’s nothing wrong with a little manifesting when making your bingo card, but self awareness is so important, so don’t put down “hook up in the Fahy Commons” if you know you can’t be bothered to walk there. You have to remember that this is real-life bingo, a ruthless game of chance, manipulation and audacity—not a vision board. You also don’t want to include too many wildly unlikely events if you actually want to have a chance of winning, but as Nude Slobs and the Benfer column incident taught us, anything can happen.

Depending on who’s involved in your

game, or who frequently visits the place you’ve chosen to display it, you may want to veil some insults more thickly than others. For example, Muhlenberg Alumna, and former columnist for The Weekly Paige Weisburg ‘23 coined the phrase “I hope they get married” as a means of insulting couples you don’t like (in her case, Matt and Rachel from the 2020 season of The Bachelor). Phrases like this that have meaning to your circle, but not outside of it, can be particularly useful if your bingo card is displayed in a high traffic area.

Once you’ve picked your content, get to work! It’s up to you to decide if you want to let chance do the work, or if you want to make things happen yourself, but either way you’ve got some serious work to do. Whether it’s conscious or not, some of us have a tendency to use full government names in the dining hall, or other very public places, at this school. Use this to your advantage, especially if there are people or situations on your bingo card that you aren’t directly involved in. As far as your participation goes, the only thing you need is the audacity; it all depends on how hard you’re willing to go. Of course an op-ed article in The Weekly would never condone potentially harmful or illegal behavior, but let your own moral compass (or lack thereof) be your guide.

One final warning: a Muhlenberg bingo board is not for you if you’re hoping for a lowkey semester. This activity demands you to be a witness to, if not a direct participant in, campus and community drama, which can have unintended consequences. But, if you’re looking to spice up The Plot™ a little, it might be worth a try!

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor (bergweeklyoped@gmail.com) or the Editor-in-Chief (weeklyeditor@gmail.com) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.

## 'Berg Bingo

Run out of GQ money	Take a 'Berg sunset photo	Yikyak causes drama	Lose your 'Berg ID	Well-known couple breaks up
Internet goes out	Frankie Grande Returns	Stuff-a-Plush	Ceiling caves in	Get runover by Academic Row Sk8rs
Theater kids vs Sports kids Battle	Get a parking ticket from Campo	Pick up a copy of The Weekly	New 'Berg Instagram Page	Java Joe's runs out of oat milk
Sack Day	GQ worker dance party	ML smoke alarm goes off	See your RA at a party	Nudeslobs part two
Overbook yourself	Dhall serves pizza rustica	Say happy bday to a tour guide	Frat spreads flu	'Berg Admin send another long email

CREATED BY PHOTO EDITOR AYDEN LEVINE '23, WITH HELP FROM THE WEEKLY STAFF.

SUBMIT TO

MAR

muhlenberg academic review

Submit your academic papers for publication in 'Berg's interdisciplinary journal! Submissions due Monday, February 6th.

Scan for submission guidelines!







# stare

By MARIA ISABEL CASTILLO  
STAFF WRITER

would i be liked the same?

many days I wonder what it would be like to move through the world if I wasn’t pretty

the white man stares, they do not turn a blind eye

he does not know that i do not go down without a fight

unfortunately for him it is not easy

any kind of objectification makes me want to hide

not because i hate it, i love myself but not when you look at me.

often taking the road less traveled, yet many still try and make there way on it

so shallow just to use our eyes, but did i expect anything less of humans? no.

but i love being pretty?

wish many would see that there is more to me and wish that it wasn’t shocking

i was not meant to be placed in this body, considering the amount of times i’ve shock myself

the time i am my most beautiful is when I’m naked

no literally, butt ass naked.

yet I don’t see myself that way.

love the parts of me that are still able to cry and the ones that never feel like they’re doing enough a little more.

love the way i don’t care enough to explain because i understand me.

humans are not just sexy, we are messy and complicated and beautiful

i am beautiful

and not just because of how often i get stared at.

# Buffet

By HOPE BIDDLE  
STAFF WRITER

Each night I choose to freeze looking down  
Under the barren Japanese Maple vacantly perusing  
The gathered buffet of the dried crusted unwanted  
Scraps for the apex predators of the night

The dusted and compacted muddle of dirt and grass  
And bird shit succumb to the overwhelming smell  
Of bagels and berries for wet nostrils and wisping tails

The echoing glass is smeared, stripping  
The natural oils of my tipped up nose  
Each time I smudge it against, the urge to adjust  
My millions of rods and cones overcomes  
The comfort of insulating fluorescents

The large muted orange mother sheltering  
The curiosity of a kit’s first winter  
Unaware and only on alert once the tip of my  
Nail taps the window pane, we stare  
We scatter away

# Audubon, PA

By HOPE BIDDLE  
STAFF WRITER

## I

The city of birds built on fertile land  
Is now turned grey

Feathers fall as fast as Autumn spreads in Pennsylvania  
On the corner of Meadowlark and Falcon  
The dying ironweed and branch-infested pool are what remains  
Of old and familial neighbors now escaped from Pennsylvania entirely

In the wilting seasonal transition of flocks flying back to our  
Deep, sultry red Japanese maple tree in the front yard,  
Unannounced neighbors unpack and stake claim of the old, faded driveway  
And hurriedly transform the corner of Falcon

The sweltering sizzling of the rays and the cacophony of pests by the pool  
Cawing, crowing, creating conversation  
Remind me that with every block party, winter is further and further away

Gripping their talons into the walled-off kitchen and spreading their beaks to the deserted yard  
They cut off the branches of the pine tree that  
Conjoined their yard to ours  
So they could renovate and remove any traces  
Of the road we used to be

## II

Families of white-tailed deer daintily graze on the only free plot of land along Trooper Road  
Connected to the finally fixed 422 and  
Placed suspiciously between the average Audubon  
Middle-class family, no single-story house is lived in  
By teenagers that claim they are sick of the birds  
But only make it as far as West Chester  
Or fly back home like Eastern Phoebes with invisible yarn  
Tied to their ankles  
Only an off-white, but now  
Gray with borders of dying green vines,  
Shed remains  
Surviving to taint Trooper Road

A man, to which I don’t know his race, age, or even how he liked his coffee  
(or if he even liked it at all,  
but I imagine he might have liked the new café down the road)  
Lived on Trooper Road  
We’ll call him Paul  
(because he deserves a name)  
Paul was normal by Audubon’s standards  
Walked his small to medium-sized dog, if he had any  
Went to his 9-5 and stayed overtime, without pay of course  
And put food in the bird feeders when  
The cardinals, crows, and mourning doves would pick at the dirt instead of fly  
On an average Audubon Tuesday afternoon after work,  
With the sky in overcast as the sun usually reflects off the clouds  
Casting a glare onto the frustrated drivers getting off of 422  
In the cluttered trees lining the hills and creeks and rivers and bends  
Of the National Audubon Society  
Birds still flew like they always seem to do  
(as I like to imagine it)  
Paul locked himself in his house on Trooper Road  
(I like to imagine)  
And the neighbors noticed because the communion  
Of silently all-knowing acquaintances that plague Audubon never notice the brilliant days  
But they sure as hell know every dismal one  
The Trooper cops disrupted any semblance of recovery  
They try to talk Paul out of his pleasantly decorated front room  
With miniature porcelain statues of his favorite breed of dog  
In order to hide the disorder in the deeper rooms of his house  
Down the street  
422 was taking kids to school on bright yellow school buses  
And adults to Philly on their daily hourly drive to work  
As they continue to ignore the flock of birds scattered from Paul’s driveway



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# Muhlenberg track program breaking records

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT



Track team members jump to new heights.

By CAITI KINNEAR  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Muhlenberg Track and Field team successfully started their season competing in four indoor meets so far. The program has broken multiple school records, set new personal records, as well as first place finishes.

One of the program's captains, Conner Soderstedt '23, remarked, "I would say the biggest contribution to our team's success is our preparation and mindset. We have been working all of winter break and putting in the work during the off season. We also believe in our team and our ability to succeed as a team."

Additionally, Muhlenberg top ten all-time performances were seen from Mike Powel '26, who scored 6th place all time in Muhlenberg history in the shot put, Dylan De Magistris '24, who scored 10th place on the Muhlenberg all-time performance list in the shot put, and Avery McNulty '26, who tied for a 7th-place all time performance in the high jump in her first collegiate meet, and scored the #1 high jump performance seen in the Centennial Conference this season.

After scoring three first place finishes, Niki Matthews '26 reflected on the meet, "It was fun to host a meet and to see all the hard work and preparation that goes into hosting a track meet. I think the home meet went really well and it was great to see my teammates and I compete in numerous events. I am really proud of my teammates for their excellent performances and can't wait to see how well we do the rest of the season."

Looking forward to future meets, track and field is ready to continue building off the successful season they have had so far. As Soderstedt exclaimed, "I think the whole team is excited and ready to compete in the Conference Championships and continue to improve upon our placement from last season." Matthews also expressed excitement in the Conference Championships, "I am excited for the remainder of the season and to see all that we can accomplish individually and as a team. I am most looking forward to the Conference Championships and the outdoor season!" There appears to be a positive outlook and future for the team as they prepare for the Conference Championships and continue to break records this season.

## T&F 1st Places

Shot Put: Mike Powel '26

High Jump: Avery McNulty '26

55-Meter Hurdles, Long Jump and Triple Jump: Niki Matthews '26

55 Meter: Shira Gamson '26

200 Meter: Shanice Williams '26

Shot Put: Erica Borbi '25

Long Jump: Connor Fenstermaker '25

4 x 800m relay: Kyle Tassone '23, Ethan Yazdanyar '25, David Ludwig '26, and Izzy Silver '25



# THURSDAY

## Lessons learned

### *Muhlenberg women's basketball @ Swarthmore*

# Mules look to make playoff push

BY JOSH BOTEL  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

The Mules came out on Thursday Jan. 28 and played at Swarthmore in a mid-week matchup. The Mules started slow in the first quarter of the game. Swarthmore outscored the Mules in the first quarter 19-2 which gave Swarthmore a lead early. The Mules also got outscored in the second quarter, 18-10. The Mules attempted to come out on top in the second half, outscoring Swarthmore 31-21; however, it was not enough, with the final score being 58-43.

"We're at a really important part of our season, so we've been talking about treating every game like it's a playoff game," said Margaux Eripret '23. The Mules are currently 8-6 in conference after coming off a recent win against Gettysburg at home. With this record, the Mules are currently in sixth place, which would be just enough to make the Centennial Conference Playoffs.

"To prepare for the rest of our games, we're really working hard on getting the best shot possible each possession down the floor. In an exciting and fast-paced game, it's important for us to execute on offense rather than let the game speed us up too much. The team has been working really hard to move the ball on offense until we can hit a good shot. We are also always looking to improve on our boxing out and rebounding, so we can limit our opponent's second-chance scoring opportunities" said Eripret.

The Mules look to add another win this week when they travel to Dickinson on Wednesday, Feb. 1, which will occur after



PHOTO BY GRACE HOFFMAN '25, COURTESY OF THE MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT

Women's basketball team celebrates three-pointer.

this article has been sent to print. Eripret continues, "Our focus going into the Dickinson game this week is to make sure we can keep up the intensity and energy we

need to win these important games. We had a busy week of games last week where we really showed what we're capable of, so we're really hoping to keep that going

this week and the rest of the season."

The Mules have six games remaining on their schedule and hope to have a strong finish to their regular season.

### *Muhlenberg men's basketball @ Swarthmore*

# Mules take on Swarthmore

BY ISAAC SHULMAN  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

On Thursday Jan. 26 the Muhlenberg College men's basketball team fell victim to the Swarthmore College Phoenixes as they continued their dominant 14 consecutive Centennial Conference regular season win streak.

The last time these two teams went up against each other, Swarthmore narrowly defeated the Mules 85-80 in overtime. Swarthmore, feeling there was something to prove, jumped out to an early 8-1 lead and seemingly never looked back. The Mules weren't able to overcome the early

deficit as they fell to the Phoenixes 88-65.

Throughout the game Muhlenberg struggled in a few key statistical categories that contributed to their defeat. The first major deficiency that the Mules looked to correct before their game against Gettysburg College is their rebound totals. Against Swarthmore, they were out rebounded 41-25. By losing the battle on the glass, Swarthmore was able to capitalize on second chance points, outscoring the Mules 18-6.

As one parses through the game stats it

becomes clear that there was also a turnover problem. In the first half, the Mules turned the ball over six times and the second half was similar, giving the ball up 5 more times. When the final whistle blew, Muhlenberg had given up 18 points off of turnovers. Couple that with seven missed free throws and there are plenty of areas that the Mules will work to improve.

Going head to head in this matchup were three of the top four Centennial Conference scorers, two of which, Giovanni Rubino '24 and graduate stu-

dent Dan Gaines '22, headline the Mule's team. Although the ball did not bounce the Mules' way, this duo did not disappoint on the scoreboard. Gaines dropped 21 points and Rubino 14 as they worked hard to reduce the deficit.

Muhlenberg rebounded against Gettysburg College on Saturday Jan. 28, and looks to carry forward the lessons from this past week against the Dickinson College Devils (this game will occur after the publication of this article).



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## SATURDAY

## Battle for 'Berg

### Muhlenberg women's basketball @ Gettysburg

BY MATTHEW BAKER-GRUNZA  
SPORTS EDITOR

On Saturday Jan. 28 the Muhlenberg women's basketball team played in the first of two games in Memorial Hall, with the men's team playing later. Their opponent was the Gettysburg Bullets, a team that sits in the top of the Centennial Conference and is well known for their defensive showcase in last year's Centennial Conference Championship against the Johns Hopkins Blue Jays. From the tip off, this was an opportunity for the Mules to demonstrate their championship potential.

In the Mules past few away games they have struggled with shaking off the post-bus-ride fatigue, often going blow-for-blow in the final quarters in an effort to regain footing. The Bullets wished this was the case. The Mules went two-for-two in their first possessions of the game, imposing their strength both on the pe-

rimeter and in the box. At the end of the first quarter, Emily Vaughn '25 had led the team to an eight point lead, with six points and two assists. As her number two, Abigail Scheidel '24 worked with Vaughn to steal the ball from the Bullets twice in one minute.

Despite Muhlenberg's field goal percentage which was seven percentage points greater than their season average, the Bullets dragged the Mules back to a two point lead before the first quarter buzzer.

For the first five minutes of the second quarter, both teams were unable to break away from the other's defense, scoring a cumulative six points. The three's started to rain from Scheidel, Emily Unger '25 and Margaux Eripret '22, followed by strong fundamentals from Avery McNulty '26 to maintain an eight point lead at half. Like Michelangelo's David, the Mules honed their offensive outline and executed their defensive plan with preci-

sion, exemplified in Rachel Saxton '25 taking a charge, which punctuated the end of the quarter.

This momentum carried through into the third as the Mules increased their lead to the largest all game (13). Much of this dominance can be attributed to the Caroline Horst '24 and Eripret defensive duo that racked up three blocks in the first two minutes. However, with four minutes left the Bullets started to establish the defensive power that CC has come to fear. The Mules offense did not score a single point for the first six minutes of the 4th. With two minutes left Gettysburg's realized the hard work of their defense. Their leading scorer for the game and 12th highest scorer in CC play Alayna Arnolie made the jumper to take the Bullets first lead of the game.

Two minutes left. Thirty-eight minutes of ups and downs, steals and turnovers, dominant defense and stagnant offense, these last two minutes are the moments

where championship mettle is tested. Unger, the six foot sharpshooting sophomore out of the Warwick N.Y., answered, in the last minute she took it end to end with a block that she quickly followed up with three to put the Mules ahead. The Bullets' Mackenzie Szlosek answered with the consistency she had displayed throughout the game (shooting 6-7) and tied the game back up with nine seconds on the clock.

After a thirty-second timeout called by longtime Mules Coach Ron Rohn, the crowd went silent and the bench began to scream out 9...8...7...6. The Mules worked the ball around, with Saxton driving down the left side. With her head up Saxton hooked the ball around her defender to Unger. The bench yelled one. The ball bounced off the backboard and through the hoop. Unger had won the game 59-57. There was no doubt this team was in hot pursuit of extra games in March.

### Muhlenberg men's basketball @ Gettysburg

BY MATTHEW BAKER-GRUNZA  
SPORTS EDITOR

23 points. 23 points stood between the Muhlenberg men's basketball team and their opponent Swarthmore College two days prior. On Jan. 28 the Mules entered their game against the Gettysburg Bullets with this turnover ridden, sour taste in their mouth. This taste was quickly replaced with blood.

In the first two minutes the Mules rolled over the Bullets' big men going on an unanswered nine point scoring run. As the Bullets tried to get back up on their feet, the Mules continued to attack the paint from a multitude of angels. Six different players scored the first 24 points. If there was a weak link, it could not be found.

Eleven minutes in, the Bullets were praying for Paul Revere, because a man from Manchester was putting on a workshop in fundamentals. Luke Gordos '25 had gone 4-4 from the paint and 2-2 from the strike.

On top of this offensive performance, the Muhlenberg defense was pushing the Bullets off the perimeter and into the

paint, where their starting center Ryan McKeon futilely attempted to go up with it against Brandon Goldberg '24. By the end of the half McKeon, who has shot 50% this season, had made only one of his four shots.

After going down 17 points, the Bullets held their heads high. Second in command Jordan Stafford dragged his team back to a six point deficit by the end of the half. Impressively, he kept his team in the game with 10 points, 2 steals and 1 block.

In the first two possessions of the half the Mule's came out hot. Tommy McGuire '25 packed the aforementioned Stafford. Then Dan Gaines '22 converted defense to offense with a dagger of a three. It appeared that packed stands might be in for another half of elite Muhlenberg basketball.

However, in the thirteenth minute the Mules faced an onslaught of Bullet threes and the same messy turnovers that had plagued them in their game against Swarthmore. By the tenth minute the lead which had once stood at seventeen points had dwindled to a meager free throw of a difference.

Now, what goes through a players head cannot be explained and it is hazardous to



PHOTO BY GABBY MATTEI '25 COURTESY OF THE MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT

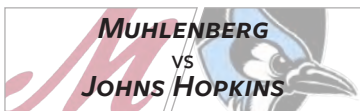
Jayson Williams-Johnson '25 muscles past Gettysburg player.

guess, but when that scoreboard hit 49-48 something clicked in Gaines, Giovanni Rubino '24 and Goldberg who led the team on 10-0 five minute run. From there the lead fluctuated but the Mules never lost control, causing two Gettysburg

turnovers in a row. Eventually the Mules won 72-62 with four players in the double-digits and nineteen points coming off the bench.

Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Feb. 2 - Feb. 9

#### Wrestling



Sat, Feb. 4 @ 12:00 p.m.  
Memorial Hall

#### Women's Basketball



Tues, Feb. 7 @ 6:00 p.m.  
Memorial Hall

#### Men's Basketball



Tues, Feb. 7 @ 8:00 p.m.  
Memorial Hall

#### Women's Basketball



Thurs, Feb. 9 @ 7:30 p.m.  
Memorial Hall





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Intramural soccer makes  
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# Housing policy updates and outrage

Students are bent out of shape about  
reshaping the residential experience.



PHOTO BY REBECCA CLARK '23

ML Hall is survived by their friends-East, Brown, Taylor, Walz, Prosser, and more. In lieu  
of flowers please send your condolences to the first-year students.

BY CYDNEY WILSON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

In an email that sent waves throughout the student body, Muhlenberg announced a series of upcoming changes to the College's residential policy on Feb. 6. These changes include the gender integration of Brown Hall, the closing of Martin Luther (ML) Hall to undergraduates and requiring all students except for commuters to live on campus. Students, alumni and parents expressed outrage, raised concerns and questions about each of these changes. Students shared Change.org petitions and GoFundMe crowd-sourcing pages, and it would be difficult to walk past a table in the dining hall without hearing whispers about the policy.

Many students believe these changes are the result of the College's need for additional funds, but Dean of Students Allison Williams cites the enhancement of the residential experience as the reasoning for these changes. She says, "While housing is one variable in the College's budget, the primary driver of this decision is the College's focus on providing the full residential college experience to every student, and supporting the four-year community, where junior and senior students provide leadership

and mentorship to sophomore and first-year students, that makes the Muhlenberg experience so impactful."

However, some students disagree that living on campus is the best option for all four years of college. Grace Nyberg '23 says "Personally, it's more affordable for me to live off-campus. I understand Muhlenberg might need to save money, but then why did we just build an entirely new building and host all these events for it? Why do we rent bouncy houses for the lawn that no one even uses? We already pay an exorbitant amount of money to attend this school, and by making students pay more for room and board when off-campus living for cheaper is an option, it doesn't feel like it has the students' best interest in mind, it just feels like a money grab."

But Williams claims the change is intended as a benefit to students, "In a reshaped residential environment, we can develop new initiatives so that all juniors and seniors have opportunities to develop more independent living skills."

When Williams was asked "What 'independent living skills' might students develop in college housing that they would not be able to develop from living off-campus?" She responded, "Students are able to develop

the same independent living skills in both spaces. Currently more than 80% of the senior class lives on-campus and have a multitude of opportunities to develop the independent living skills needed to be successful after graduation."

Joel Hark '22 says that living off-campus was impactful, and he gained skills from the experience. "I think [the change] will greatly affect students, one because you're losing skills that you're gonna have to learn eventually one day, but it's a great time to learn as you're starting to grow, go into new environments, and taking care of your own apartment and place, and finding apartments, it's a whole new process. I think it's a great time to learn... and I think it's just super unfortunate."

Julian Goldman-Brown '23 adds, "Off-campus housing is integral to the social life of students and provides students with the opportunity to build life skills that will be used post college such as effective communication with a landlord and billing companies."

Concerns about the future of some Allentown landlords have also been brought up, with Goldman-Brown saying, "This also hurts landlords in the Allentown community since if college students aren't renting these prop-

erties who is[?]"

"I live off-campus and my landlord (who is an alumni of Muhlenberg) depends on Muhlenberg students to sign the lease each year," says Claire Spenard '23. "I'm upset for him that Muhlenberg students are not going to be able to live in this amazing house and I wonder if a lot of landlords in this area are going to be faced with the same problem. This will have an impact on housing dynamics in this neighborhood for sure."

Students will still be able to live in off-campus housing for one more year, which also raises concerns for the current class of juniors, many of whom will be left with the responsibility of clearing out houses which have remained in the hands of Muhlenberg students for many years. Also, who will shoulder the responsibility for damages to the house that might have been done in years past, but which will be discovered by landlords at the end of next year?

Of the various aspects of this new policy, the removal of off-campus housing as an option seems to be creating the highest level of outrage, with a Change.org petition having received nearly 500 signatures as of Feb. 7.

**SEE HOUSING PAGE 3**



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

## 1/30/23

Parking—There was a report of an illegally parked car in the Baker lot. The vehicle was issued a ticket. Found Property—There was an Apple tag found in Prosser Hall. The owner was not found and the item was put in lost and found.

## 1/31/23

Lost Property—There was a report of a lost backpack. It was later found.

## 2/01/23

Suspicious Person—There was a report of a suspicious person. They were spoken to and left with no further incident.

## 2/02/23

Parking—There was a report of an illegally parked car in the North lot. The vehicle was booted by Campus Safety and the boot was later removed. Parking—There was a report of an illegally parked car in the Benfer lot. The vehicle was booted by Campus Safety and the boot was later removed. Sick Student—There was a report of a sick student in Prosser. MCEMS responded and the student was transported to the hospital by campus safety. Parking—There was a report of keys locked in a car in the Prosser lot. Campus Safety successfully retrieved the keys.

## 2/03/23

Liquor Law—There was a report of an alcohol violation on Leh Street. Allentown PD and EMS responded and transported the student to the hospital. Plumbing Problems—There was a report of a leak from a burst pipe in Prosser Hall. Plant operations was notified to repair the problem.

## 2/04/23

Alarms—Report of a fire alarm on Liberty Street. The system was silenced and reset. Substance Violation—There was a report of a sick student in East Hall. MCEMS and EMS responded and transported the student to the hospital. Liquor Law—There was a report of an alcohol violation in Benfer Hall. Allentown PD and EMS responded and transported the student to the hospital. Vandalism—There was a report of vandalism to a car causing paint damage in the Martin Luther lot.

## 2/05/23

Vehicle—There was a report of a disabled vehicle in the Benfer Lot. Campus Safety responded and successfully jump-started the vehicle.

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coffee with a Scone, Biscotti,  
Muhl Ear, or Croissant





**FROM HOUSING PAGE 1**

Esther Klinger '25 says, "The removal of off-campus housing for those that don't commute is perhaps the most pressing issue. Not only does it remove the option of weekend parties, which many would argue is integral to their college experience, it also removes the option of cheaper housing for those that cannot afford to live in the dorms all four years. Living on campus costs around 14k [per year], excluding dining plans. Having a roommate or two off-campus would translate to much less than that. Therefore, removing that option is not only stupid but also classist."

Parents also shared their concerns by commenting on the petition, with Jennifer Hoffman saying, "If the College intends to make this change, wait until a new class coming in is fully aware of the changes to best make the decision for choosing to attend Muhlenberg. My daughter made the decision with the knowledge she would have the option to live in an off campus house her senior year."

Mark Collazo '22 wrote on the petition, "As an alumni [of] this school, I had a great experience in my four years here. I want the future students to have their undergrad years similar or better to what I had. Them not getting off-campus housing is ridiculous and takes away from that experience. Shame on 'berg."

Many athletic teams rent houses off-campus, some of which have been passed down within the team for over a decade. A GoFundMe to "Save the Dupe," an off-campus football house that has been passed down for over a decade, has also been created; presumably to raise enough money to purchase the house. Owen Daddona '22 states on the GoFundMe, "The legacy of Muhlenberg Football is in grave danger because of foolish and non-sensible decisions made by the administration of the College. This fund is an attempt to preserve the great culture that every previous mule has worked to forge."

Football team member Emmett Reilly '23 told The Weekly, "This is incredibly detrimental to our ability to perform the way that we have in years past... As a team, you rely on your ability to recruit talent and talented players. And the idea of not having off-campus housing is a huge detriment to kids who have a certain idea for the college experience. And that's not speculation on my part, I've got several teammates who turned down offers to go to other schools, because they didn't have the option of off-campus housing. So right away, our ability to recruit was immediately going to be impacted, because there's an inability to show them a wider college experience as an opportunity."

Williams says "Of note, many of our peer institutions also require all undergraduates, including student-athletes, to live in college housing for all four years with no negative impact on recruiting. This includes schools such as Ursinus, Susquehanna, Moravian University, Franklin and Marshall and many others." However, Muhlenberg's football team is largely believed to be stronger than that of these schools. The role of housing in the strength of teams is unknown.

Baseball team member JJ Foti '26 echoed Reilly's sentiments saying "As a freshman, it is extremely upsetting to hear this news, because this is something

that you look forward to as a senior. And it's not only upsetting, but it's concerning, because I'm worried that a bunch of Muhlenberg athletes are going to leave. That's something that had never crossed my mind before I heard this. And now it's an option for me... I love Muhlenberg, I love it. The reason that I came here was because there's great athletics, great academics and a great social life. And I feel like by getting rid of this [off-campus housing] that takes away a third of what college should be for me and for other athletes."

Reilly says, "We've talked about this as being the end of sports at Muhlenberg, not that there won't be teams, but just for the simple fact that the way that we operate as a team, and the way that we recruit is going to be completely changed. And obviously my class isn't directly impacted and the class below me isn't, but the kids who are below that, sophomores and freshmen, are each trying to find ways that they can have an off-campus place. Because it really is something that we view as very important."

Another big concern among students is losing the ability to host social gatherings in off-campus housing. Williams says, "College Life formed a student committee in the fall to begin looking at social policy and guidelines for hosting parties. We are expanding this group to look broadly at student social life on campus and to make recommendations for changes that will support healthy and vibrant social life on campus. The majority of our peer institutions require all students to live on campus as well and have many models for ensuring that student groups can still host events and have places to socialize that are monitored in different ways to provide a positive student experience."

An anonymous residential advisor (RA) asks, "What will this mean for RAs? Depending on what happens, RAs would be tasked with keeping these parties at bay, and having to deal with more alcohol, drug and social gathering issues and related incidents. Not only is that more paperwork and time, but will put added stress and pressure on RAs. RAs are already under a lot of pressure with how much they deal with on a weekly if not daily basis, and this would only contribute further. If the school is going to continue down this route, they better alter the pay or responsibilities of an RA accordingly."

One exception to the off-campus housing ban is Alpha Tau Omega (ATO). Williams said, "ATO will continue to have members living in their house. They have a long-term legally-binding agreement with the College that allows for this and that is not able to be amended." ATO is the only organization with an official Greek letter house that is not owned by the College. However, while other Greek organizations will be able to keep their official College-owned letter houses, their off-campus rentals will not be allowed.

Rumors abound about the future of ML. Will it be repurposed for student use? Will Muhlenberg house graduate students there? Will it be rented out for interns from the Lehigh Valley Health Network? These questions remain unanswered with Williams saying, "The College is considering options now and will share the next steps with the community

when those are finalized."

This leaves first-year students wondering where the bulk of them will live when it comes time to select housing for their sophomore year, and whether they will still have the ability to develop the same kind of communal living bonds.

Williams says, "While the exact percentages will depend upon the preferences of seniors and juniors, as always, we expect to house the majority of sophomores in Brown and Benfer, with smaller numbers of sophomores living in East and Taylor."

An anonymous source from Housing and Residence Life shared that they expect "rising sophomores will make up about half of Benfer, half of Brown and smaller percentages in East, Taylor and the MILE area," thus confirming that there will be no space that is primarily sophomores.

Klinger says, "While the administration is claiming that the removal of ML is to facilitate a good community, it would accomplish exactly the opposite. As a sophomore living in ML, I can say with full confidence that the community I have formed there far exceeds that of the freshman housing quad."

The future of Brown Hall as an integrated space is allegedly in line with what other institutions are doing. "Most colleges and universities have moved away from the practice of single-gender residence halls. This will allow all students more flexibility in selecting housing options that meet their needs. In addition, there will be opportunities for smaller interest housing communities," according to the infamous email.

Tori Brady '26 says, "If the main claim to change Brown to coed is because 'other colleges are doing it too' let me ask this—if people are going to jump off a bridge... are you going to do it too?"

The reality seems to be that without ML, Brown is necessary to house the sophomores. Vanessa Graniero '24 started a Change.org petition that reads "One of the changes announced was that Brown Hall, a dorm designated for women and non-binary students only, would be opened up to everyone. The email stat-

ed that this was for purposes of allowing 'flexibility' for students choosing housing options. What this change gives to the student population is far less than what it takes away."

The petition continues, "Brown has long been a safe space on Muhlenberg's campus for [its] occupants. The people who choose to live in Brown choose it for a reason. That reason is oftentimes personal comfort. Some women and NB [non-binary] people are not comfortable living in close proximity to men. Whether this is based on negative past experiences or not, it is valid, and has been a choice they have been able to make. However, now, that choice is being taken away." Additionally, some students who wear a hijab choose to live in Brown for the freedom and comfort that comes with living in a non-male space, and now this safety will also be compromised. This petition has received over 100 signatures as of Feb. 7.

Klinger says "Brown Hall has been a huge refuge and safe space for female identifying students. Many students need that housing option in order to feel safe at Muhlenberg. To strip them away of their safety for the sake of convenience is, in my opinion, unethical."

"Incorporating men into Brown is just an obvious money grab that once again doesn't take the students' interests to heart," says Sofia Tartakovskaya '26.

Brady says "I just think it's ridiculous that the school thinks that by taking away the senior housing as well as making Brown a co-ed dorm it will create 'more of a community' by cramming everyone into more tight spaces where they will feel less comfortable... It also makes no sense to me that this decision has been made without the perspective of students, the ones who will literally be living in those dorms... Why force people to pay for higher tuition AND not be able to live in the community and environment they want and deserve?"

Despite the College's defense of the decision, many students are left thinking that these changes are a cash grab, and one that has definitely struck a chord with the student body.

# Fahy Commons' grand opening

BY SINHYANA SRIVINASAN  
STAFF WRITER

The Fahy Commons has been much awaited by the entire Muhlenberg community, and at last, it has finally been finished. Nestled behind Trexler Library, it showcases contemporary architecture and an extremely sustainable design.

Being the first new building that has been constructed on campus since 2006, Fahy Commons demonstrates Muhlenberg's efforts to achieve a more sustainable campus. The building already has a LEED Gold certification, and will hopefully be one of the 20 projects in the world to achieve Living Building Challenge CORE certification. Capital Projects Manager, Richard Waligora, stated how "There are

zero buildings right now with the Living Building Challenge CORE certification, and we will hopefully be one of the first."

The building houses a few of the College's departments. It is home to the Office of Community Engagement's (OCE) new location, the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion (MCIPO), and the Schools of Graduate and Continuing Studies. It holds writing and innovation and entrepreneurship classes. The second floor is the home to the GCE office, as well as a private room dedicated to breastfeeding.

"The new Institute of Public Opinion facilities in Fahy Commons provide an incredible boost to our research initiatives,"

SEE **FAHY** PAGE 4



## FROM FAHY PAGE 3

commented Christopher Borick, Ph.D., director of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion. “The new space allows us flexibility to engage with evolving methodologies as we move into our third decade of public opinion research. The facilities also allow us to more fully integrate our activities into the life of the College by increasing our visibility to the campus community.”

The building was designed to have outdoor classrooms on the balconies and patios. The areas have been set up with strong Wi-Fi connections and seating areas as well, so classes can be held outside during the warmer spring and summer months.

The building has senior art studios in the basement and a maker space that includes a 3D printer and laser cutting machine. Most of the business and innovation-oriented classes are going to take place at Fahy Commons.

When Eric Covell, the technical director for theater and dance, was asked to describe the building in three words, he said it was “innovative, articulate and understated.” Covell, who did not want to waste the trees being cut down for the building, decided to use the trees to make the furniture pieces scattered throughout the building. He said “I wanted to save the trees cut down and use the wood to make something.” These pieces of furniture greatly contributed to the aesthetic of the building’s interior, with beautiful designs and unique placements.

The builders also wanted to ensure the use of as many natural resources as pos-



PHOTO BY ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR MADDIE CILIENTO '25

The newly opened Fahy Commons

sible, which ties into the sustainability of the building. The building features large windows in every room which lessens the use of artificial light, conserving electricity and energy. There isn’t a single room in the building without natural light except for the bathrooms.

Cameron Eaton '23, stated how “It is not only ecologically sustainable, but it also promotes better mental health.”

The windows of the building are speckled with white dots, designed to prevent birds from flying into the glass, greatly reducing bird deaths. Apart from birds, the building is also home to bees. Many of the hives in the trees were unfortunately destroyed when the area was excavated. Blocks of various sizes with holes drilled

into them were built into the exterior of the building to serve as a new home for solitary bees who live outside the hive.

Alison Rutyna, '23, was impressed with the windows saying, “The big windows are my favorite thing because you can see all of Cedar Creek Park. I also like that it is environmentally sustainable and makes me feel like the College is trying for sustainability.”

“I’ve only been there one time but I remember it being very nice and the architecture was beautiful,” said Ava Mattson '26. “The building also had a fresh smell and looks amazing on campus. I haven’t been inside a classroom but it looks like there’s a lot of natural light which would make me much more productive.”

Fahy Commons is filled with a lot of unique features, especially its rainwater harvesting system, which also contributes to its sustainability. When the rainwater hits the roof, it goes into the gutters on the south side and then goes into a 10,000-gallon rainwater system. After being filtered, it is then used to flush the 9 toilets in the building.

In between the terraces, there are rain gardens integrated into the decorative rocks. These gardens take the water that comes off the terraces and filters out the contaminants and dirt.

When Waligora was asked about the importance of sustainability, he said that “I think we need to follow sustainability guidelines so that our children and children’s children have a good place to live.” Covell also mentioned how Fahy Commons “is going to have an impact on a number of levels. From just a liberal arts college to general marketing, I think it is going to appear in a lot of different conversations about art progress and graduate study programs. I think by doing this and putting so much effort into it, the impact is going to be felt not just in the departments of the building but across the entire environment of Muhlenberg.”

Fahy Commons is a masterclass in sustainable architecture on college campuses. It is a proud moment for Muhlenberg to have taken such a leap in sustainability and environmental conservation. The actual wonder of the building cannot be felt unless you visit it yourself, so take Waligora’s advice when he said “come down and take a look for yourself!”

# Muhlenberg Career Center brings back internship scholarship

BY SAMANTHA TEMPKIN  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Internships are a vital part of the Career Center’s efforts to help students obtain experience in a given field, but its staff members also acknowledge that it can be difficult for students to gain this experience while also maintaining affordable living conditions. In recognition of the issue, Assistant Director of Experiential Learning, Jessica Deemer '21, and Director of Employer & Alumni Engagement Chiquita Griffin are again launching the annual scholarship with the goal of supporting students with funding for internships. The Alumni Board Career Scholarship aids students financially as they engage in internship experiences that will be integral for their future professions. The scholarship offers stipends to Muhlenberg students completing low-paid or unpaid internships for Summer 2023, ensuring that students will have enough financial assistance to pay any costs related to the internship.

“Internships are a core part of career development. They allow for students to start learning industry specific skills and take learning outside of the classroom. This biggest obstacle to completing an internship, however, is that not all experiences are paid,” says Deemer and



PHOTO BY PHOTO EDITOR AYDEN LEVINE '23

Applications for the Alumni Board Career Scholarship close on March 10.

Griffin. They further explain the necessity of this scholarship, saying “Working without compensation is a privilege that not everyone can take; we need to gain hands-on experience while also being able to keep up with the costs of living. This scholarship was developed to help support students with the financial expenses associated with completing a non-paid or low paid internship. This scholarship benefits students by giving them the ability to choose an internship based on their interests while having the financial assistance to help with the costs of carrying out the internship experience.”

This annual scholarship is a collabora-

tive effort between The Career Center and the Alumni Board. As the new project managers of the scholarship, Deemer and Griffin met with members of the Alumni Board last December to plan out the timeline for this semester and to create the application on Handshake, making it accessible for Muhlenberg students. They note that, “Our Alumni Board is just as passionate about the scholarship as us; we both want to ensure we are utilizing our resources to help support students in their career exploration and increase the accessibility of internships.”

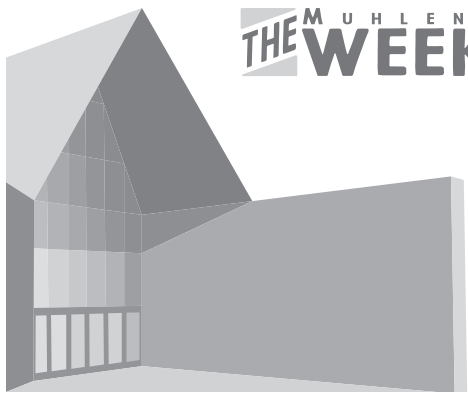
“That seems like a really nice thing to have, especially for college students. It’s

an internship opportunity so it’s obviously going to help and be beneficial, and I think that’s a really nice thing to have as an offer,” says Amanda Heckman '25 on the scholarship. Elena Cataloni '25 adds on, saying “With everything that financially happened with COVID, it’s great and provides opportunities that may not always be there.”

All students that will be returning as undergraduates in fall 2023 are eligible to apply and do not need to have a secured internship at the time of application. There are some restrictions, however. Internships must be at least 140 hours during the summer months, and stipends may not be used to fund any fees related to academic credit. Furthermore, internships secured through fee-based internship placement services or for Muhlenberg College are not eligible.

The application can be found through the OneLogin portal on Handshake or on the Career Center’s Instagram (@berg-career) through their LinkTree. Applications will close on Mar. 10 and students who are selected will be asked to send an internship acceptance letter before they receive their reward. Students with any questions about the scholarship should email Deemer (jessicadeemer@gmail.com) or stop by the Career Center in the basement of Seegers Union.





"There's no prerequisites to worthiness. You're born worthy..."  
- Viola Davis

## Celebrating Black History Month



PHOTO BY PHOTO EDITOR AYDEN LEVINE '23

Come to the Light Lounge to appreciate the chapters of Black history at Muhlenberg.

BY SHINAM HUSSAIN  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

Feb. 1 marked the beginning of Black History Month, and Muhlenberg began the celebration of the month with a timeline in the Light Lounge, titled "Toward Diversity: Chapters in Black History at Muhlenberg." This timeline includes student and faculty contributions, and showcases important events in Muhlenberg's history pertaining to Black students and faculty. The timeline begins in 1926, noting the first Black student by the name of Clara I. Lane. The timeline continues to 1947, where five Black men, by the names of Julius Becton, William Pulley '51, Payton Flournoy, James Williams '51 and William "Elmo" Jackson '51, were Muhlenberg's first Black residential students.

As the timeline continues, it goes on to mark vital points in Black history at Muhlenberg, from the opening of the Office of Multicultural Life during Black History Month, to Zaire Carter '22 becoming the first Black president of the Student Government Association. This timeline is a part of the Muhlenberg Memories Project, which is a project meant to teach history through the lens of community.

Showcasing Black history through this timeline offers reflective knowledge on the role the Black community has played at Muhlenberg.

Giovanni Merrifield '23 shared "I think BSA, Queer and Trans People of Color Collective (QTPOCC) and Africana Studies have done a great job in preparing events for Black History Month. I'm thankful that the College has prompted the events and encouraged people to attend."

The student spotlight that will be displayed in the Light Lounge is a special way to commemorate Black History month. Merrifield stated, "The student spotlight is essential in highlighting Black students' voices on campus. Oftentimes, I feel that we are either overlooked or often too seen like we're under a magnifying glass for our accomplishments. I feel that the spotlight does accomplish the goal of showing our excellence, our Black excellence, in a way that is best for us."

Throughout the month, there are events planned to continue celebrating Black History month. "There are so many events I'm excited for, I can not choose just one," said Merrifield. "The Black Love event that we recently did was so lovely, it brought such a sense of love to our community."

Merrifield offered his thoughts on what the College could be doing to uplift Black students and faculty beyond the month, stating "To be honest, I feel that there are things the College could be doing, such as implementing academic courses that should be mandatory for students to take on Critical Race Theory and that celebrate and enjoy real and authentic Blackness."

Muhlenberg's student-run organizations have been planning and organizing a variety of events to celebrate Black History Month. Muhlenberg has promoted these events, however, it should be acknowledged that these are events for students by students, and not by Muhlenberg as an administration.

Nevaeh Everett '25 said, "Muhlenberg is trying to be better in celebrating Black History Month. However, there is more that could be done. I'm glad there's representation throughout the College. However, I think there could be greater connection between students of color and administration." Everett also mentioned upcoming events to celebrate Black History Month. "We are hosting a fashion show on Feb. 24. It is to show Black artists and their outfits and clothing styles. It's for all people on campus to attend."

Ibrahim Sidibeh '25 gave his opinion on Muhlenberg's commemoration of Black

History month. "I think Muhlenberg is celebrating it decently. I appreciate the banner being in a prominent area of campus, where everyone can see. However, I think implementing it everywhere on campus is important to show that prominent Black excellence is here, and it should be viewed everywhere."

"The student spotlight is a great idea, viewing and seeing Black excellence on campus is a great way of associating Blackness with excellence and joy as opposed to strife and sadness. We need to do better as an educational institution to stray towards Black celebration," Sidibeh added, "I think starting and committing to more initiatives beyond the scope and timeline of Black History Month even such as spotlighting students consistently so we don't have to wait for Black History Month to be acknowledged. Black excellence is a year-round thing and we should not have to wait and be seen once a year for 28 days."



# “Ars Moriendi or The Art of Dying”

BY DANNY MILKIS  
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

During the fall semester of 2022, Brayden Stallman '23 had a spark of inspiration, which led to the development of a long-form video project, created with the intention of making a serious difference in the world of the performing arts. The project, titled “Ars Moriendi or The Art of Dying,” is a documentary on performers’ bodies which examines the relationship between the body and performance, as told through the perspectives of performers and educators working on the Muhlenberg College campus.

“I’ve watched so many friends throughout my time here involved in the performing arts destroy their bodies for the sake of their art, and it’s something that’s always been in the background of my experience here, and I wanted to shed a light on it, because it’s always been there, but we’re never really talking about it,” continued Stallman.

In terms of composition, Stallman arranged the footage in a very specific way when editing the production together, highlighting the stories of faculty and students who replied to his interview request.

“It kind of moves through vignettes of topics because there’s so much substance behind the subject that I wanted to touch on everything without breaking it up into too many segments,” continued Stallman. “So I tried to arrange the stories in a way that organically moves through topics in order to make an overall cohesive story.”

“I think something brilliant that this documentary emphasizes is the idea of selling your body and perfecting it to an ideal that exists,” said Allison Mintz '23, an interviewee whose responses were featured in the piece. “There’s still so much work to be done in theater in this community, striving to improve the body image conversation and helping ourselves and others when we need it.”



PHOTO FROM “THE ART OF DYING”

Amélie Parczany '25 and Bethany Qian '25 discussing performers who sacrifice their bodies for art.

Stallman explained that the inspiration for the title, “The Art of Dying,” stemmed from the fact that when one does art with one’s body, one is always in a state of active deterioration, and furthermore accelerating that state of deterioration for the sake of furthering one’s art or participation in art of others.

“I hope people see how people are destroying their bodies, and are forced to look at their bodies not only as something to be reshaped and molded and told that it’s wrong, but it’s something that is

disposable, which is what the art world tells performers about their bodies,” expressed Stallman. “I hope people take away that your body is not disposable, that your body is your tool—your instrument; And you should take care of it.”

Lily Knowles '23, another interviewee whose responses were featured in the piece, said, “I hope the audience gets from this documentary the message that performance can live in our bodies, but it’s not always ethical. Performers are in a constant state of perception of them-

selves, as well as from others, which is tremendous pressure.”

Mintz elaborated, “I want people, particularly those who aren’t necessarily as ingrained in the arts, to understand the sacrifices that people make for their physical and mental health, for the art of art, if you will.”

This documentary is publicly available on Youtube.

## Back on the Cuff: improv meets EDM

BY IAN CLARK  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, many clubs found themselves barely staying afloat as students returned home. In some cases, entire clubs faded out of existence due to lack of attendance. Off the Cuff, the dramatic improv group, and Muhlumination, the electronic dance music [EDM] dance group, are two of these unfortunate casualties. Off the Cuff was a prominent group, in the midst of many comedic improv groups, that existed as a tool for actors to test their abilities and create dramatic scenes from pretty much nothing. On the other hand, Muhlumination brings to light a side of dance that not many are exposed to here at Muhlenberg, EDM. Both clubs captured interesting parts of the artistic spectrum found on campus and now, co-founders Chris

Rubingh '24, Joey Marcacci '23, and Lauren Koranda '23, seek to merge the two clubs to form Back on the Cuff, the first combined dramatic improv and EDM dance group at Muhlenberg.

Marcacci speaks to the interesting merger of these two clubs, “Dramatic improv has really helped me as an actor and performer. I know pairing it with dance as inspired by Muhlumination will only help to foster an amazingly creative and inspiring space on campus for both actors and dancers.”

At first glance, the union of Muhlumination and Off the Cuff seems like a strange idea to say the least, but as Marcacci brought up, the pairing plays off of the collaborative artistic community at Muhlenberg with the hope to inspire more artistic voices. Rubingh touches on this, “Muhlumination was a group... allowing for students to have a multimedia experience of fun, Off the Cuff was a club

looking to challenge the forms of what improv could be. We believe both these clubs have the unique ability to balance each other out and to come together to provide a truly unique and multi-genera-

tional experience,” explained Rubingh.

Muhlumination alum Connor Baker '22 spoke on his experience being a part of the dance group before its demise, “My

SEE **CUFF** PAGE 7



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BOTC

Lauren Koranda '23, Joey Marcacci '23, and Chris Rubingh '24 want you to audition for Back on the Cuff (pretty please.)



# Artist Spotlight: Sydney Holliday, '23

BY ALMARAH URMAN  
STAFF WRITER

Sydney Holliday, '23, is graduating as a theatre and media and communication double major. She has been a part of many theatrical productions and endeavors and is the current student station manager for WMUH, Muhlenberg's radio station. She is also a member of Damsels In Excess (DIE), the non-cisgender male improv and sketch comedy group.

Holliday recently participated in her first theatre departmental production as a member of the chorus in the staged reading of "(&Medea)".

"It was my only departmental show experience [and] I always knew that I'd be able to get a whole lot out of working with a professor outside of a class so I'm glad I got that opportunity, especially going through the whole process of a staged reading and working directly with the playwright, being able to give her feedback right then and there and seeing it kind of show up in the script. Jess [the playwright] was so wonderful and open and receptive to what we thought would be best for the play and some of our stuff ended up popping up in the script that we performed. It was a really quick process too, it was only two weeks before our first performance, and it just taught me a lot about how quickly a show can come together, what that process was like, and many other things."

Holliday combined her passion for acting and audio production with her Cumulative Undergraduate Experience (CUE) project in a reading of the iconic radio play War of the Worlds. She directed, produced, edited and acted in it.

"That process taught me a lot about what I'm able to do on my own. With self-producing and everything, which ends up being a whole lot of what you do as an artist after your time in college, I think being able to have that in the safe environment that is Muhlenberg was really helpful in helping me feel ready to go after college."

Holliday went on to explain that she was lucky to find a consistent creative outlet from the moment she arrived at Muhlenberg.

FROM **CUFF** PAGE 6

experience was for 3 semesters, and it was such a crazy final ride. When the club ended I had no idea if it was going to come back." He continues on, with a mindset shared by many upon hearing of the new club, "Now that it is [resurrected], honestly, I'm very curious on how it'll go."

When asked about upcoming plans for the club, including their first performance, Koranda mentioned that Back on the Cuff is "planning on being the first group to perform in Fahy Commons! We're excited to make use of the newest space on campus and bring together the interests of so many 'Berg students that haven't been tapped into in some time."

This group is sure to shake up the status quo of the Muhlenberg Comedy Association. Fun With Science and Muhlenberg Improv Association (MIA) member Sully Grace '24 commented on this group,

"DIE was the first thing I joined that made me feel at home and was just something that kept me going when we were online and in the pandemic. The things I've learned with improv and sketch comedy just helped me in so many other parts of what I do here at Muhlenberg... Being able to write some kind of story has been very helpful in both the things I'm studying. It's just a really good group of people, it's one of the things I'm just excited to go to every week, and I think we've put on some pretty funny stuff."

However, Holliday's college experience was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and her education and artistry were forced online. Despite that, COVID played a role in Holliday's knowing what she wants to do after college.

"As an artist, especially as an actor, it's all about human interaction and feeding off of your scene partner and an audience. It's so hard to do through a computer screen and I think I realized it pretty quickly, and everyone else realized it pretty quickly so we made do with what we had. This is the first semester I'm in an acting class on campus, otherwise, I got a lot of my acting education when I was abroad, whether that was in New York or Italy. During the pandemic, I also took on a couple of jobs that weren't acting-related... Through these paths of 'maybe I'll try this and maybe I'll try that,' I always found myself seeing an actor do their thing and being like, 'well, I want to be up there with them.'"

After graduation, Holliday hopes to begin her acting career. Through Muhlenberg's senior showcase, she is hoping to get an agent in New York and plans to apply for some acting apprenticeships. She expresses her thanks to all the professors, students and family members who've gotten her to where she is. She's looking forward to her last few months on campus.

"I'm having this vibe with senior year where it's like this is the time to make everything happen, so I'm trying to make as much of it happen as I can while also being in the moment. There's been a lot of moments where I'm sitting there and I think, 'God, I'm really happy to be here.'"

saying "I was once a non-believer, I found it too ambitious to combine both dramatic [improvizations] and EDM dance but then one day Joey and Chris came along, and I knew the project was being held up by two magnificent performers. I can't wait to have my mind blown."

To find out more about Back on the Cuff like "updates on shows and audition notices please follow @backonthecuff on Instagram! We plan to hold auditions very soon and would love to see you," advertised Rubingh.

Marcacci said, "My hope for Back on the Cuff is that it inspires students on campus to test the limits of what they think is possible. Bringing together dance and improv in this way is truly special, and iconic. I can't wait to see the group come together for the first show!"



PHOTO COURTESY OF SYDNEY HOLLIDAY '23

Sydney Holliday '23 made her theatre department debut in the staged reading of "(&Medea)."

*Parchitas Kitchen*

LATIN CUISINE

**BRUNCH  
LUNCH  
DINNER**

Tuesdays & Wednesdays  
10am-5pm  
at Jay's Local

**STARTING  
FEBRUARY 7**

Jay's  Local



# The world is on fire, and we need to ask why

## *The state of sociology at Muhlenberg*

BY CLAIRE SPENARD  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Have you ever wondered what sociology is? It's the study of society... okay, but so what? What do you even talk about in sociology classes? These were some questions that I asked myself when I first came to Muhlenberg with my eyes set on psychology or neuroscience. I knew my true goal was to work with people, and it wasn't until finding sociology that I realized working with people would be easier once I learned the contexts in which people live and why they act, dress, talk, interact, etc., the way they do. Sociology would not keep me from working with people, but rather only further strengthen my capacity to be a mental health professional or expressive arts therapist (which is my dream). Sociology crosses paths with a wide range of other fields including political science, economics and psychology. Students who come out of sociology programs often go into social service work, education, research, business and industry jobs and policy social justice work.

The skill set that is gained through the study of sociology is particularly important today. In our young, liberal, media consuming social sphere there are plenty of buzz words flying around. "Systemic racism," the "construct" of gender, and class "hierarchies." These are terms we reproduce and repurpose constantly, but

do we know what they mean? Do we know the histories of these concepts and where the terms belong and do not belong? The questions we ask in this field and the ways in which we ask them are at the core of all that we think we know and expose the truths of our world that often go untouched. Sociology major Allison Pottie '23 says "I see everything completely differently now."

The "who are we" statement on the Muhlenberg website states that "Muhlenberg is dedicated to shaping creative, compassionate, collaborative citizens." Our liberal arts curriculum at Muhlenberg is supposed to uphold ideals that are achieved through requirements such as the humanities where students "interpret and evaluate issues of human concern" or the Human Difference and Global Engagement requirement which aims to "broaden and deepen students' understanding of human difference and to develop the intellectual and civic skills students require for participation in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world." And yet, not every student graduates from Muhlenberg with an understanding of the race, gender and class structures that dictate every moment of their lives. This is where a sociological perspective can provide a bedrock for what we may learn in these General Academic Requirements.

Unlike many other majors, the things we learn in sociology classes apply to everyone. We learn how to practice civic engagement, why social dynamics that are embedded in our communities exist and how to navigate the implications of working with, against or around them. Today, we see a trend of institutions being criti-

cized and challenged to make real structural change. Gen Z is calling for higher education to decolonize and make greater efforts toward diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. Sociological understanding is crucial in making these efforts come to fruition and yet it is one of the smallest departments in colleges and universities across the board. The sociology department at Muhlenberg is undervalued and unsupported. Our department particularly deals with the pressing truths of our changing world and we look critically at the role institutions have played throughout history. This makes you think about why sociology, among other departments of a similar nature, might be pushed to the side. I don't think it is a coincidence that our collegiate institution is failing to recognize a field of study that actively picks apart the dangers of social institutions—such as education—in the interest of understanding how we are defined by these structures. We pose a threat.

There are many first-year students entering Muhlenberg who wish to know how people work and why they do what they do. There is a tendency to take this question into psychology or the hard sciences, but I would argue that what you learn in psych is only half of the full picture. Sitting in Intro to Sociology, I was invited for the first time to criticize and tear apart phenomena that appeared to be set in stone. The way I now understand human social behavior, relationships and cultural aspects of day-to-day life is much different than what it would be if I had not gone through this department. In the words of Assistant Professor of Sociology Sahar Sadeghi Ph.D., "Studying sociology

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor (bergweeklyoped@gmail.com) or the Editor-in-Chief (weeklyeditor@gmail.com) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.

makes sure that the knowledge we are acquiring (in all fields) makes sense in the world. The world is on fire and there is a reason why." If we claim to want to make change and support the most vulnerable people in our society, then my question is: why aren't we more concerned with knowing the reason why?

# The Bethel Projects

BY GIOVANNI MERRIFIELD  
STAFF WRITER

When traveling to South Africa for the "Culture, Conflict & Community in South Africa" MILA (a short-term study abroad trip offered by the College), I had the privilege of meeting this wonderful woman, Karen Maarman, who has founded an NGO with co-director Denise Crowster in Cape Town called The Bethel Projects. The Bethel Projects' Facebook states: "We are an NGO focused on providing support & self-empowerment to the abused, unemployed & disadvantaged." The Bethel Projects is so very impactful as it runs workshops for people who are survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, those affected by gang violence, men struggling with their identities and so many other crucial things. This NGO also helps those with HIV/AIDS, those suffering from homelessness, and people who just need to be supported. The Bethel Projects is truly committed to helping their community thrive and grow to its full potential, blossoming all of the

seeds that were planted in its members.

Many of the challenges listed that The Bethel Projects helps with are directly related to colonization, but more recently, specifically to Apartheid. Even though Apartheid ended in 1994, Black, Coloured (a term used for mixed race people in South Africa,) and brown South Africans still struggle greatly due to the residual effects of it. Non-white South Africans were not granted rights and were treated as subhuman. They were subjected to slavery, sexual assault/rape, displacement, starvation and murder under the Apartheid government that ran from 1990-1994. To this day many indigenous South Africans lack the resources they need to survive because of the racist systems that continue to work as they were meant to, keeping all non-white people down.

With that being said, The Bethel Projects is trying to combat these challenges actively, especially right now since it's "back-to-school season" for students. One of the Projects' core beliefs is that education helps people advance socio-economically, mentally, spiritually, intellectually and socially. School is some-

thing that helps to fight against poverty and uplift communities in all areas. Currently, The Bethel Projects is doing a fundraiser to raise enough money for 1000 pairs of school shoes for students in the Cape Town area. They have raised enough money to purchase 820 pairs of shoes so far, now they just need 180 pairs left to complete their goal!

Now, it's very important that this goal is accomplished because supporting students is essential to preventing the continuance of modern-day Apartheid. As a now friend of Karen's, I told her that I and a few other students would do our very best to bring awareness to The Bethel Projects and to successfully reach their goal with support from Muhlenberg organizations such as BSA (Black Students Association), QTPOCC (Queer Trans People of Color Collective) and VOS (Voices of Strength). As you all know, it is Black History Month, so it is an ABSOLUTELY FANTASTIC time to donate your money to this lovely NGO that brings out the best in people. Each pair of shoes are R350, which is about \$20 USD. Please donate what you can, preferably in incre-

ments of five or ten.

Black communities are often overlooked and are not seen, this is a great opportunity to support an all-Black-run NGO! To donate, please use the QR codes attached! The QR code is linked to my PayPal and Venmo, which Karen has approved. As soon as someone sends money to my account, it'll be sent directly to Karen's. You can also go to my Instagram account @kidgio23 and click the link in my bio or repost my post to spread the word around campus, to other campuses, to your family and friends and everyone you know! The goal is to reach 180 shoes raised by the end of February. Let's do it!

See flyer on page 9 with QR codes to donate!



*Tiny horoscopes for a tiny campus*

# MICRO-ASTROLOGY

*Weekly advice and predictions*

Communicated to The Weekly staff by Victor's Lament

BY THE UNIVERSE  
ASSISTANT OP-ED EDITOR**Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)**

To be so real with you, that shirt is not it. You know the one.

**Pisces (February 19 – March 20)**

AAvoid the letter "Y" as much as phisicall possible (there, I helped ou out a little)

**Aries (March 21 – April 19)**

You will mistake a cough for a sneeze and say "bless you." You will think about this for the rest of the day.

**Taurus (April 20 – May 20)**

Unclench your jaw for the love of God! How do you walk around like that all day?

**Gemini (May 21 – June 20)**

Yes you do deserve a little treat, but you also cannot afford a little treat. No, stealing a little treat is not an option.

**Cancer (June 21 – July 22)**

Have a paperclip on you at ALL TIMES this week.

**Leo (July 23 – August 22)**

You will have a life-changing personal

revelation while procrastinating your homework. Consequently, you'll skip class the next day because you never got it done

**Virgo (August 23 – September 22)**

Write the name of the person you're mad at on a piece of paper and stick it in your shoe so you can step on them all the time.

**Libra (September 23 – October 22)**

Have you tried meditating? Stop. It's not working. Cut out cotton balls instead.

**Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)**

The best place to start your plan for world domination is taking the lefty desks before anyone else can.

**Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)**

Spice up your workout by listening to the Pirates of the Caribbean soundtrack. Forget treadmill struts, treadmill Jack Sparrow run instead.

**Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)**

Watch a new movie and make it your entire personality, then pretend you've never seen it when people bring it up.



## Listen Loudly



A creative space for marginalized voices

# When it's blue out

BY MARIA ISABEL CASTILLO  
STAFF WRITER

used to wake up when it was blue out

my favorite time of day (past tense)

when its quiet and the sun not ready yet

love the night more now,

still not a fan of the dark though

blinds are not enough to keep me asleep

these are the times im reminded the planet still moves with me

it continues to rotate

"make sure not to miss my turn"

favorite part is when i'm up before everyone else

now that's changed

there are times i do not care to be around everything.

it all has gotten too much for me.

love it when its still blue outside

when i feel like i'm the only one awake

same for the night.

these the only times i know how to concentrate.

now i wake up when the sun gets here, blinds still not enough to keep me asleep.

## Black History Month Fundraiser! The Bethel Projects: Back 2 School Drive

In partnership with BSA, QTPOCC &amp; VOS

### What is The Bethel Projects?

The Bethel Projects is a NGO in Cape Town, South Africa that works to help survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, homelessness, AIDS/HIV, men struggling with their identities, and students and the advancement of their education.

### The Fundraiser

The Bethel Projects is raising money to buy 1000 pairs of new school shoes for their students that are headed back to school this week. They only have **180 pairs left to go!** It's **OUR** job to help them reach their goal by the end of February! Each pair is R350, about \$20.60! We ask that you donate what you can!

## Scan either QR Code to Donate!

(Please donate in increments of 5 or 10)



Giovanni Merrifield

Giovanni Merrifield

@kidgio23



PayPal



venmo

For more information check out The Weekly of 02/09 or look up 'The Bethel Projects' on Facebook!



# What’s happening in the CC?

BY MATTHEW BAKER-GRUNZA  
SPORTS EDITOR

With four games left until the Centennial Conference (CC) playoffs, the men’s and women’s basketball teams are fighting to ensure their spot in the top 6. On Saturday, Feb. 4, the women’s matchup was between two heavy hitters, the John Hopkins University Blue Jays and the Haverford College Black Squirrels. While on the men’s side of the CC, the recently defeated Gettysburg College Bullets (#4) traveled to the den to face off against the Ursinus College Bears (#3).

The Blue Jays have cruised through this season with only two bumps in the road as they lost to the Dickinson College Red Devils (#2) and the Bullets (#3). However, these losses came early in the season, since then the Blue Jays have been rolling over winning most games by double-digits. Haverford, on the other hand, has had a season of inconsistency, with an offense that is dependent on their PG Ally Landau flexing her scoring talent. Landau in high school scored over 2,000 points and has carried this innate ability to find her spot into her college career. In the Centennial Conference she is second in average points by only .4, with 16.9 PPG.

Haverford came fast out of the blocks racking up a 10-2 lead in the first five minutes of the game. For the Blue Jays it seemed like the lid would never come off the basket. But no overarching synopsis was going to fit this dynamic game. The Blue Jays clawed their way back to

a 2 point deficit. The Blue Jays would go on to outscore Haverford in the second quarter, shooting the lights out with a 53 percent FG percentage compared to the dismal 15 percent shot by Haverford.

The next two quarters would bungee cord as Haverford would come close to regaining the lead. The Blue Jays outscored Haverford from the bench and off turnovers, so no matter the 23 points scored by Landau she could not carry her team. Additionally, Olivia Parisi, a graduate student at Hopkins, scored an all season high of 25 points. The buzzer sounded and the Blue Jays had won 55-49. They were still the team to beat.

In their games on Tuesday, Feb. 7 the Blue Jays continued their successful campaign. Haverford lost to the Muhlenberg Mules who demonstrated their ability to defeat the #3 Bullets and #4 Haverford.

Meanwhile, in the den the Bears were seeking redemption against the Bullets who had beaten them on Jan. 7 in OT.

Often, games are determined in the first ten minutes. These ten minutes show coaches the weak links. These ten minutes can get in a star point guard’s head. These ten minutes can lead to an early lead from an energetic underdog. The first ten minutes of this game was a back-and-forth, neither team seizing control of the scoreboard and neither team controlling the ball well (both teams would end the game with 33 combined turnovers). By the end of the half the Bears had taken a narrow lead of five points. A lead that they would maintain well into the second half, leading at most by 8 points at times.



Muhlenberg basketball teams are training to secure their spot in the CC playoffs.

Nate Williams, a freshman guard from New Jersey, would eventually break the ice with one of his two three-pointers for the night, with eight minutes left in the game. From there the score would tie and the lead would switch twice before the Bullets came away with the 72-67 lead.

Neither team looked particularly stronger than the other as they ended in a tie for third. Sitting in fourth the Mules will look to bring the same energy that they brought against Gettysburg to their game on Feb. 15 versus the Bears.

## A college-sized chasm

### *The non-athlete perspective*

BY DANI ROBAN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When the question “do you see a divide between athletes and non-athletes on campus?” is asked, everyone’s face turns blank, as if there is so much to say but they lack the words to explain it. An outsider looking in on the Muhlenberg College campus may observe a large divide between varsity student-athletes and non-athletes.

“I feel like you can definitely tell who the athletes are because they are always grouped together,” said Paola Navarro ’25, a sprinter on the Track and Field team. Varsity college athletes automatically spend at least a few hours a day with teammates, so naturally they easily connect with teammates because of the sport they have in common.

“I definitely do see a divide because of the media, and the environment we are in. For example, theatre majors see so much media that portray them [as] separate from athletes,” said an artist, Maggie

Muhlenberg College consists of a variety of personalities and identities. Naturally, from this diverse set of backgrounds, friend groups will develop around common interests to provide social outlets that students can lean on through the trials of college. Athletes and non-athletes and the constructed divide between the two groups dominates many Muhlenberg students’ understanding of social hierarchy at Muhlenberg. In Media & Communication Lecturer Sara Vigneri’s class, entitled Sports Journalism, a group of five students set out to understand this apparent chasm through a variety of perspectives. The Sports Editorial Board at The Muhlenberg Weekly hopes to clarify that these boundaries are constructed by Muhlenberg students and are porous walls that can be breached by those who look past social expectations. Separately, these articles perceive the issue as black and white opinions. As a collective, they function as a nuanced analysis of the Muhlenberg microcosm. The Weekly will be releasing each article separately with the hope that the Muhlenberg population will digest and reflect on their own opinions, remembering that the five articles function best as a collective of diverse thinking.

Guinan ’25. In today’s world, social media is a big part of people’s lives. Research on media use estimates that Americans spend between 10 and 12 hours a day us-

ing some form of media. Whether we like it or not, we are influenced by it.

Another reason that non-athletes say there seems to be a divide is the stereo-

type that athletes don’t accept queer and LGBTQ+ culture as much as other groups

SEE **NON-ATHLETE** PAGE 11



# Intramural soccer

BY WILLIAM LLOSA  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The score is 10-10. The next goal will decide the game. There are ten minutes left of intramural soccer. Two soccer players from the Muhlenberg men's team have snuck into the field house to watch the intramural game, against the coaches' wishes. This is the most exciting and competitive game played in a while at intramural soccer, with each team consisting of about ten players, and the vibe was that of a playoff game in overtime. Each team hit the post of the beat-up old lacrosse goal at least three times in the last two minutes, and a game winner seems inevitable and in the making. Suddenly, the student athlete working at the front desk comes up to the sideline and demands that the ball be handed over and the game stopped. The game finished 10-10, and players were visibly frustrated as they walked off. Why was the game put to a halt ten minutes before intramural soccer is scheduled to end? The answer is simple: the man working the front desk just wanted to go home. He had no idea what he was interrupting.

Kaleb Gearing '23, president of intramural soccer, is shocked. He knows he is going to have to send some emails to the head of intramural sports to make sure that intramural soccer is allowed the full time that they reserved in the field house.

Ryan Hardy '23, vice president of intramural soccer, does not believe that it gets the respect and recognition from the college that it deserves. "The College has like \$100 million dollars in endowment, and they can't spend 20 to 30 bucks on a new soccer ball?"

Intramural soccer meets at the field house on Mondays and Wednesdays from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.. It gives a lot of people the opportunity to make friends, broaden their social circle and meet people that they may have never been able to meet otherwise. Kaleb Gearing '23, the president of intramural soccer, first went to intramural soccer in 2019 and it has been his go-to club since. "My freshman year really brought me out of my shell, so I'm hoping to kind of pass that along to other people, even if you're not that great at soccer."

For him, it is more than a place to play soccer and exercise; it is an outlet for him as a busy college student double majoring in computer science and physics to meet people and have a good time. "I mean, I didn't even play soccer in high school," he explains. "But soccer has always been just a fun activity for me to kind of hang out with my friends and just casually play.



PHOTO BY WILLIAM LLOSA '23

Intramural Soccer players at practice.

And I feel like anyone can play soccer." He saw problems with the way intramural soccer was run in the past and decided to do things differently when he became president. Leading was Gearing's next step in trying to make it into an environment where people could feel like part of something. "We want people to just feel like they can come there and just kind of do what they do. They don't have to worry about things like, 'Are [we] the best at this sport?'" Kearing wants people interested in intramural soccer to know that they are free to do whatever they want and encouraged to have fun in a space where they can socialize with their peers.

As a first-year, intramural soccer helped Gearing believe in himself and believe that he could succeed socially and be a valued member of the Muhlenberg community. "[This club] allowed me to not only move forward with soccer and eventually take it over, but also kind of build myself up to realize that I can fit at this college."

Gearing hopes he can make intramural soccer a positive experience, and although sometimes it gets a little bit intense, his goal is to make people feel like they can have fun there and laugh. "It's getting a lot more just kind of laid back, which is what we like, and that's exactly what we want. We want people to just feel like they can come there and just kind of do what they do." Gearing's biggest challenge is ensuring that people with a competitive nature don't bring too much

fire. "Everyone has their guilty, guilty moments. I mean, we've had one instance this year that caused a problem, but we really dealt with it and moved on through it."

Members of intramural soccer have developed a bond, it is kind of like a family where everyone is very close. "I feel like it's just that nice community where, you know, people are going to check up on you and people are going to say hi to you," said Gearing. "I go out of my way to greet people I see from soccer on a regular basis. And I think soccer has given me some of my best friendships because you just get this nice vibe."

Gearing makes sure to allow for some competition amidst the good vibes and positivity. "Everyone has their little competitive partner that they maybe compete with a little bit and I think it just adds to everything." It is a very diverse group of athletes and people of all skill levels are welcome. "We have our jokesters; we have our people that maybe played soccer all the way through high school. We have people that have never played soccer, and everyone kind of seems to get along like 99 percent of the time. We've had an instance or two, but overall, the number of friends I've made outweighs any kind of even smaller issue."

It is a Wednesday night, and intramural soccer is ready to kick off. However, the floor is wet, and players are slipping as they try to make runs, tackles or any kind of move with the ball. This is because the

Muhlenberg soccer team used the field house to practice due to the rain. Members of intramural soccer understand that the actual school team takes priority over a club. However, it is too dangerous to play, so Gearing must end it early. "They came in and made the floor so slippery that it was dangerous for my guys to be inside the gym." Gearing was able to fix the problem behind the scenes, sending emails so that the team switched shoes and tried to keep the floor dry.

"I think the guys that come love it. I think they have a lot of fun. I think even though we are seen as a little bit lesser in the eyes of the general public, I think that the people that come realize the value of soccer and kind of realize what it brings to our community here. And I think what it brings is a lot of just good friendships that can last a lifetime and kind of just a good way to vent some competitive nature because everyone has a little bit of that competitive theme in them and they want to play occasionally."

FROM **NON-ATHLETE** PAGE 10  
of people. "A lot of queer and LGBTQ culture is embedded in theatre culture and because of that it is automatically an assumption that LGBTQ [culture] and sports cannot be collided," said Guinan.

Guinan mentioned the small number of LGBTQ+ people in the Olympics, and acknowledged that there is some controversy there. She hopes that "with newer

generations there will be change, less judgment and more education on how stereotypes are not accurate."

Club sports play an interesting role in this controversy as well. For example, many athletes don't think that the ultimate frisbee team is a sport. While it may not be a varsity sport they still need a place to practice and compete. "We still need to practice, we feel disrespected

sometimes... There is not much we can do about it until we are given more money and more time" said Gabe Duftler '25. Duftler feels as though the divide between the athletes and non-athletes is pretty big because of the fact that his team has been kicked off the field for a varsity sport team to use.

"Both groups aren't inherently evil, it's just because of stereotypes and the cul-

ture and environment that they assume they are not supposed to interact with the other group," said Guinan.



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## Sports forecast for spring 2023

PHOTO COURTESY OF AYDEN LEVINE '23



Lacrosse



Baseball/Softball



Tennis



Golf



Track

BY OLIVIA OBERMAN  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

The weather may not be getting warmer, but Muhlenberg's frozen grounds have been broken nonetheless— in the spirit of spring season play. There is high potential for success across the board this spring, given the Mules started preparing for their upcoming seasons immediately following their final performances in 2022.

In the off-season, it is imperative that teams and individual athletes make the commitment to bettering themselves. It is often these offseason efforts that encourage true success when it counts. Assistant strength and conditioning coach Andrew Yasenchak lets us in on his observations, "All of the spring teams consistently showed up to lifts during the off-season and each of the teams put in the work collectively, by choice. I think this effort will go a long way in aiding their successes this season."

Muhlenberg's spring varsity sports consist of lacrosse, track & field, baseball, softball, tennis and golf programs. Several athletes were asked to express the outlooks, goals and or advantages that each of their programs have as they begin to face the culmination of their off-season efforts.

The 2022 Centennial Conference champions and NCAA qualifying Muhlenberg women's softball team is one program looking to top their recent successes. Dara DiMaiolo '24 expresses, "It is very important for our team to focus on the now, while building upon our skills and mindset from our previous successful season. Our team prides ourselves on the amazing leadership we have all around and how well we work together, which will ultimately aid in our success. Our preseason has been amazing already,

Nothing but sun for Muhlenberg's spring sports.

and we are so excited to take on the 2023 softball season."

After earning a 5-1 home game record and making Centennial Conference play-offs in 2022, the Muhlenberg men's lacrosse team has also set higher goals for 2023. Captain Max May '23 speaks on behalf of the program, "Our goal this year is to win the conference championship. Throughout my four years here the team has been on an upwards trajectory as we have been more competitive every year. We feel this year that with our challenging out-of conference schedule we will be adequately prepared for conference play. We return a lot of talent on both ends of the field and feel we can compete with any team."

The Muhlenberg women's lacrosse team is equally excited to start competing.

After a 11-5 season record last year, the Muhlenberg women's lacrosse team is ready to be back on the turf. Sarah Duffy '23 states, "Our team's biggest advantage this season is definitely our team chemistry, everyone gets along really well and is excited to have a great season. Being part of such a close, positive team is exciting because we are all working together to have the most successful season."

The Muhlenberg tennis teams have been seen making a lot of progress in the offseason in hopes to build their program as a whole. Women's captain Malin Hermanson '23 expresses, "Our goal for this season is to see improvement. We're a fairly new team and everyday we come to practice itching to get better. I'm looking forward to seeing us secure some wins in the 50/50 matches that didn't go our way last spring". Sophomore captain of the men's tennis team, Isaac Schulman '25 adds on, "We've got an exciting season ahead of us. We are looking to build

on last year's success and really turn this program around."

One highlight of the Muhlenberg baseball team's 2022 season was their double header win against Johns Hopkins University. The baseball program has since spent their time off getting ready to reap similar successes in 2023. Captain Jake Swerdloff '23 expressed, "Our goal is to win the conference and make a run after that. I think anyone who sets their goal any lower than that is selling themselves short. Our preseason is going very well. We've been working harder this preseason as a team than any year I've been a part of this program. I've really felt that this year I have seen a culture shift in our team's work ethic. Guys have really been working hard in the weight room, at practice, and guys are constantly doing additional work on their own."

Both the Muhlenberg men's and women's golf teams attended invitationals in the fall and spring of 2022. There is no doubt their commitment has given them an edge for their prospective spring season. Captain of the men's golf team, Aron Gianchandani '24 says "Our team's biggest advantage in aiding our success this season is that we have started team workouts. Coach Jared's workouts are golf specific and they are really helpful to us in finding our own individual swing and becoming stronger. We have new team members joining this spring who will provide a spark to our team. We are also preparing for our Spring Break trip to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. In Myrtle Beach we will have quality team bonding and help each other better our golf swings and practice playing smart."

The Muhlenberg track and field program has recorded countless achievements in the past year including multiple broken school records and several overall

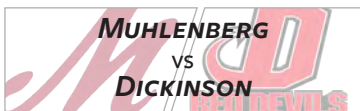
program placements at meets. More details on their successes can be found in the recent article "Muhlenberg track & field program breaking records" by Caiti Kinnear '24. Adrienne Ellison '23 speaks to the team's spring season outlook, "Collectively, our team outlook is overwhelmingly positive. We have a pretty young team, so there's fresh energy ready to fuel our season. There's absolutely a ton of talent on the team and we're ready to attack the season in full force. We are currently in our winter track season, which helps us figure out how to gear up for the spring season, and what events we really want to focus on. We are seeing some fantastic indoor performances that are providing us with hopes for an even more successful season in the spring. I predict that we will have many more impressive races, jumps, and throws when the spring track season rolls around."

Throughout the year, the track and field program has noted their tight team chemistry as an advantage of theirs on multiple accounts. Jason Ivey '23 adds, "For this season both the men's and women's teams are looking to go at least top 5 in conferences and for a number of individuals - to win it. The team this year is looking better than last year in nearly every way. Pretty much everyone on our team has improved their times/distance from last year and our freshman class is really strong too. Our biggest advantage for this season is the close knit team chemistry we have. The amount of time we spend outside of practice together builds a lot of trust and that translates to better performance at meets."

According to this forecast, there is a sunny trajectory for Muhlenberg athletic programs going into the 2023 spring season.

Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Feb. 9 - Feb. 15

### Women's Basketball



Thurs, Feb. 9 @ 7:30 p.m.  
Memorial Hall

### Track and Field



Fri, Feb. 10 @ 1:00 p.m.  
Staten Island, N.Y.

### Wrestling



Sun, Feb. 11 @ 10:00 a.m.  
Collegeville, Pa.

### Men's Basketball



Sun, Feb. 11 @ 3:00 p.m.  
Lancaster, Pa.



## IN THIS ISSUE:



### NEWS

Trexler Library architect dies at 99.

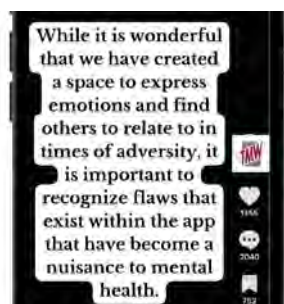
[read more on page 3](#)



### ARTS & CULTURE

Lily Arovas '23 wins 1969 recital competition at Egner Chapel.

[read more on page 7](#)



### OP/ED

The effect of TikTok's algorithm on mental health.

[read more on page 8](#)



### SPORTS

Women's tennis works towards future success.

[read more on page 11](#)

## Infused water controversy



PHOTO BY ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR MADDIE CILIENTO '25.

The new infused water station in the Wood Dining Commons.

BY CYDNEY WILSON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

At the beginning of the spring 2023 semester, students were surprised by a new addition to the dining hall: an infused water station. Questions arose about where the station came from and how it was funded.

This project was introduced to Muhlenberg's Student Government Association (SGA) over winter break, therefore only SGA President Ben Eber '23 and Treasurer Evan Lipman '24 participated in the decision making process, with the approval of SGA advisor Ellen Lentine. Despite the fact that SGA's General Assembly did not vote on the decision, this was within the bounds of SGA's bylaws, which state: "The Executive Board shall be authorized to conduct the business of the SGA between academic semesters. Expenditures in excess of \$1000 must be authorized by the Advisor or Dean of Students."

SGA used funding from their reserves to pay for the station. Director of Communications Allison Mintz '23 explains the funding structure of SGA as being divided into three groups: the internal fund, which is used for activities such as DEI training and tabling materials; the general fund, which is used to support clubs and organizations; the reserves, which must be used for capital projects. In the past, SGA reserves have been used to

create Mule Express and install laundry swipe machines (costing approximately \$8,000) in the MILE area. This year, approximately \$4500 of the reserves was used to install the infused water station.

Treasurer Evan Lipman '24 explains, "This account is unique in that it has a maximum amount of \$10,500 that can be in it at once and it is refilled, if needed, with any excess funds from the general fund from that year, if there are any."

Vice President Olivia Tebsherany '23 says, "I think it's just important that people know that... this was not money that was designated to go to clubs. This was not money that's designated for student organizations or affinity groups. That's the general fund, which has boatloads, boatloads more money than our reserve does. Our reserve fund is specifically for these construction and beautification projects."

"I'm not sure how I feel about having not voted. And I think a lot of other general assembly members definitely shared my sentiments," added Tebsherany. "It's not that I really have any problem with the water station itself. I understand why the decision was made. And I do think that the money was well spent. However, I do wish that there could have been an actual vote."

The money SGA spent went to

[SEE CONTROVERSY PAGE 3](#)

## Shortage of housekeeping staff at 'Berg



PHOTO BY LEAH KRESSSEL '26

3rd Floor Brown Hall housekeeping closet.

BY MATTHEW KLINGER  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Muhlenberg has been no exception to the nationwide staffing shortages plaguing the country. For the College, this has resulted in there being a shortage of plant operations staff; specifically housekeeping staff for both residence halls and academic buildings.

The housekeeping shortage is not a new issue. Joe Spirko, the housekeeping manager for plant operations, stated that "coming out of COVID we experienced the great resignation of workers. Some of these factors were leaving for higher pay, vaccine mandates and early retirement. The pressures of other higher paying positions in the area had the largest impact." Muhlenberg has combated the worker shortage by increasing its benefits and offering new incentives to keep its current staff as well as to encourage new workers to come to campus. In addition to making numerous salary adjustments to remain competitive with other job offerings, Spirko noted that the College also "adopted a referral program where employees who refer to the hiring of a housekeeper are eligible for compensation." These new programs seem to have worked; as of right now the College is almost fully staffed for full-time positions.

However, despite most of the positions being filled, Muhlen-

berg has still struggled to fill all of its third-shift openings. The third shift cleans academic buildings only, usually starting at 10 p.m. and working hard to keep the buildings clean for the next day of classes. With a shortage of available workers for these positions, the College has resorted to backfilling those jobs with overtime pay, with some housekeepers working double shifts.

Even though there has been some difficulty in hiring and retaining enough housekeeping staff, Muhlenberg Housing and Residence Life (HRL) is still confident that they can keep both residence halls and campus buildings clean. When asked, Spirko maintained that HRL has "had minimal complaints from the HRL Staff and only a few work orders for cleanliness in the buildings. Any concern is investigated and corrected as soon as possible." In addition, there has been no change to the frequency at which residence halls are being cleaned; housekeeping still cleans each residence hall every weekday between 6:30 a.m. and 2 p.m..

However, students are not convinced that the housekeeping shortage has not affected dorm cleanliness. Sam Orme '26 said that "the dorms are not as clean as they used to be, and it seems like even when they are cleaned, they are still lacking thoroughness and attention to detail."

[SEE HOUSEKEEPING PAGE 4](#)



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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The Muhlenberg Weekly strives for accuracy in reporting and writing, but we acknowledge that mistakes happen. Readers are invited to submit corrections about errors in articles, and they should be submitted to weeklyeditor@gmail.com. Corrections are also brought to our staff's attention by our own editors and writers. Our staff will review the suggested correction, consult with the author of the article, and issue the appropriate correction. Online corrections are located at the bottom of the article. Print corrections are located within the paper, on the page indicated in the online edition. However, The Weekly does not grant take-down requests for articles.

## ADVERTISING POLICY

We request that advertising material be submitted by the Monday preceding publication at 5 p.m. If materials have not been received at that time, the advertisement will not run and the advertiser is still responsible for 100% payment. We reserve the right to decline any advertisement that is misleading, inaccurate, fraudulent, or deemed generally unacceptable. This determination will be made by the Business Staff in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief. The Muhlenberg Weekly maintains a distinction between its news & editorial content and advertising. As such, advertisements will not be accepted if they imitate the general style of The Weekly, intentionally or unintentionally. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: headlines, bylines, fonts, and column-arrangements. In order to make this distinction, The Weekly also reserves the right to include the word "advertisement" on any advertisement that is deemed too native.

# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

## 2/13/23

Lockdown Drill—There was a lockdown drill in Trumbower Hall.  
Dating Violence—There was a report of dating violence, HRL and Health Services was notified.  
Noise Complaint—There was a noise complaint in Roberston Hall. The area was checked and nothing could be noted.

## 2/14/23

Sick Student—There was a sick student in Trexler library, MC EMS and AEMS responded and transported the student to the hospital.  
Injured Student—There was an injured in the ML lot, MC EMS responded and Campus Safety transported the student to their residence.  
Suspicious Person—There was a report of a suspicious person at the Trexler library. The area was checked with no one found.

## 2/15/23

Traffic—There was a report of an illegally parked car in the Baker lot.  
Traffic—There was a report of an illegally parked car in the Front drive.  
Traffic—Campus safety assisted Allentown PD with a vehicle accident on Parkway Blvd.

## 2/16/23

Traffic—There was a report of an illegally parked car in the North lot.  
Traffic—There was a report of an illegally parked car in the North lot.

Traffic—There was a report of a minor accident in the Front drive. The individuals exchanged information with no further incident.

## 2/17/23

Alarms—There was a fire alarm due to cooking in Roberston Hall. The system was silenced and reset.

## 2/18/23

Found property—There was a phone found in the LSC, the owner later claimed the phone.

## 2/19/23

Sick Student—There was a sick student in Walz Hall. MC EMS responded and the student refused further treatment.  
Sick Student—There was a sick student in Seegers Union due to an alcohol violation. MC EMS responded and the student was transported to the hospital by campus safety.  
Welfare Check—There was a report to make a welfare check on a student. Contact was made and the student was transported to the hospital by a Campus Safety Officer.  
Hit and Run—There was a hit and run in the Village causing minor damage to the bumper. There are no suspects at this time.

# THINK BEFORE YOU TRASH IT



These items are reusable & do not belong in the trash:

- Green to go containers
- Silverware
- Reusable Cups

We are in short supply... Help us stay green by bringing your 'Berg to Go containers back to the Wood Dining Commons to help us avoid using paper to go boxes.



# Building Muhlenberg's future: *Robert Geddes and the Trexler Library*

BY AMY SWARTZ  
STAFF WRITER

Robert Geddes, architect of Muhlenberg's Harry C. Trexler Library, sadly passed away of natural causes at age 99 on Feb. 13, 2023 in his home outside of Princeton, New Jersey. He was a renowned architect, educator, planner and writer. Geddes made monumental contributions to the communities where his projects were located.

Geddes was born on Dec. 7, 1923, to Louis and Kate Geddes, both of Ukrainian-Jewish descent. Though he was born in Philadelphia, he moved to New Jersey soon after, while also living in Los Angeles for several years in his early life. He studied at the University of California, Berkeley and Yale University for his undergraduate degree, but his time at Yale was interrupted by three years in the military. He eventually earned his bachelor's of architecture from Harvard University's Graduate School of Design, which is now considered to be his master's degree, as Harvard's Graduate School of Design now only offers Geddes' program at the graduate level. Further, he is the recipient of various honorary doctorate degrees from New Jersey Institute of Technology, City University of New York and Princeton University.

Though he is most commonly recognized as a successful and influential architect, he was also an educator himself. He began his teaching career in 1961 at the University of Pennsylvania School of Design, where he taught architecture and civic design. In 1965 he became the first dean of the School of Architecture at Princeton University, a position he held for over 17 years. During his time in the administration, the School of Architecture began admitting women as students. Soon after his time at Princeton, he took the position of Henry Luce Professor of Architecture, Urbanism, and History at New York University until 1998, when he retired from education.



PHOTO COURTESY OF 'BERG SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AT TREXLER LIBRARY.

Robert Geddes will always have an impact on Muhlenberg with his architectural contributions.

During his time as an educator, he also had an influential career as an architect. Beginning in 1953, he co-founded an architectural practice that has offices in Philadelphia and Princeton. They competed in international competitions, making a global impact on architectural design choices. He also worked on numerous domestic projects, including the Police Headquarters of Philadelphia, Hill Hall at Rutgers University-New Brunswick and—arguably most famously—the Dining Hall and Birch Garden quad and the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton.

Geddes clearly had a drastic impact on innumerable amounts of people throughout the nation, but he also left quite the impression on Muhlenberg College, being the architect of Trexler Library. What is now the Haas College Center once served as the College's library. The word "library" can still be seen on the front of the building. By the late 20th century, it

was clear that Haas Library was no longer feasible to use, as Muhlenberg's book and document collection was rapidly growing, so a completely new building was in the works.

Muhlenberg also wanted to further distance itself from the old, Gothic style of architecture that can be seen in some of the older buildings on campus, including what was then the Haas Library. The Baker Center for the Arts was Muhlenberg's first step in this process, and there were hopes that the building of a new library would achieve the goal of modernization.

Geddes made it possible for Muhlenberg to take a massive stride forward, as his designs allowed for more than double the space they had in their previous library. This opened the door for Muhlenberg students to have a space on campus that fit their needs and to have the necessary resources readily available for their use.

Not only did Geddes design Trexler Li-

brary, but he also decided where on Muhlenberg's campus the library would best fit. Originally, eight sites on campus were being considered, but Geddes decided to build it on what was previously considered Hagen Field. Before Trexler was built, this space served as the field for the women's field hockey team.

Geddes had an undeniable impact on Muhlenberg College, and helped propel Muhlenberg College forward in being more accommodating to its growing number of students, while also giving the College an architectural design that could carry them into the 21st century and beyond. Extending beyond Geddes' influence on Muhlenberg, he created a permanent impact on his students, fellow architects and communities that have been graced by his expertise.

## FROM **CONTROVERSY** PAGE 1

the stations themselves, new plumbing and a filtration system. The station is a partnership between SGA and dining services, therefore "dining services is the group maintaining, servicing and filling the infused water station," said Eber.

Eber shared that one of the primary motivating factors for his approval of the station was that he had been informed that there was no other source of filtered water in the dining hall. This information was also disseminated to the SGA general assembly. John Pasquarello, general manager of dining services, defused this rumor, stating, "All beverage dispensers in dining services have filters on them, including the new infused water station in the Wood Dining Commons."

However, Eber was recently informed that an additional dispenser will soon be added with non-infused filtered water. The question remains: why would another

machine be added if the water in the soda machines is filtered?

Pasquarello also shared the inspiration for the station, "Dining Services and campus stakeholders looked at other beverage options for [Wood Dining Commons]. After researching recent popular trends in college dining halls, infused water was at the top of the list. Our plan is to offer a variety of infused fruits and vegetables that change regularly as we assess the popularity of the flavors we have on display. So far the infused water is very popular and we refill the dispensers 10 to 12 times each day."

Responses to the infused water station from the student body are fruitfully mixed.

Tova Granowitz '23 said, "I never used to drink water and now I do every time."

While an anonymous student stated, "If you're gonna spend that much money on it, make it taste like something... It lit-

erally tasted like nothing."

Shobha Pai '24 felt differently, "I actually really like it. My day is so bad every day. I drink from that and I'm like 'oh my god I'm so fancy.'"

"Name one person that legitimately asked for that," said Angel Madrigal '26. "There was this one day they said that it was agua fresca when it was literally just watermelon slices. That is spa water."

Kassy Prado-Escalante '25 said "Why are we using these resources for something that no one wanted? You couldn't even put a milkshake machine? A smoothie machine? I don't want to go to Freshens to get a smoothie." She also expressed that she would prefer having fresh fruit to eat rather than infused water. "This school already has like a fruit shortage. [There's no] actual fruit."

"I enjoy the water station a lot to be honest but I do not think it was worth \$5,000. I think one water station with

just lemon water would be sufficient and the rest of the money could be used elsewhere. To be honest, I'd prefer just lemon water anyway, like the other ones don't go with a lot of the meals I'm eating so it feels out of place," said Carper Wiggins '26.

Pai added, "It's the one good thing in my day, I get it for lunch, breakfast and dinner."

Ultimately, opinions on the station are left to the taste of the individual student, but it seems that most students agree on one thing: they would've liked to have been consulted before the decision was made.



# Dr. Ruha Benjamin, Ph.D., discusses viral justice during Black History Month

By SHAIYAN FEISAL  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

Muhlenberg College is honoring Black History Month by recognizing and bringing awareness to Black activism with this year's theme "A Love Letter to Black Activism: Celebrating Agents of Change Around the World." The first event of the month took place on Feb. 16 with keynote speaker Dr. Ruha Benjamin. She is a professor in African American Studies, founder of the Ida B. Wells JUST DATA Lab and is the author of three books. Her talk was centered around her latest book "Viral Justice: How We Grow the World We Want."

Before the COVID-19 pandemic hit the United States, Benjamin focused on revolutionary research centered on big structural changes regarding race, justice and technology. However, the turmoil from the pandemic and the anti-Black police violence that occurred in 2020 led Benjamin to reflect on the importance of small and individual actions. "Viral Justice" is a personal exploration of how society can be improved just with day-to-day tasks.

Benjamin highlighted that one major thing that we learned from the pandemic is that "something that is undetectable can be deadly and transmitted without us even knowing. Doesn't this mean that something so small can transform the world around us and have an exponential effect towards justice? This attention to seemingly small actions is what I think of as 'Viral Justice.' We can't wait for top-down change, or those who monopolize power and resources to save us. We have to start right in our own backyards. 'Grassroots' can literally mean working in the grass."

Benjamin then gave examples of viral and transformative justice, or "ways of making things right." Breonna Taylor tragically lost her life in 2020 due to a brutal forced entry by seven police officers. The "Breonna's Garden" app was created to commemorate her life. The app contains an augmented reality (AR) where Taylor is surrounded with her loved ones and with things she loves such as tulips and butterflies. Taylor's family was heavily involved in the creation of the app and it is still a safe space for people to mourn. Users can record messages that can be heard by all of the visitors of the garden, which is an example of how a group of people can have a significant influence. Benjamin said that in Breonna's Garden, people can "heal, grieve and organize." The creation of this app has allowed for Taylor to be immortalized.

Benjamin then segwayed to an incident of viral justice close to her heart and her childhood home in Los Angeles, California. Property owner Frederick Pardee, owner of Corbett and Clemson apartments, passed away. Pardee was a Boston



PHOTO COURTESY OF RUHABENJAMIN.COM

Ruha Benjamin, Ph. D., discusses creating change by bringing awareness to black activism.

University (BU) alumni and decided to donate the apartments to the university. This meant that BU could evict the 130 residents, who are mostly people of color, if BU sold the apartments to for-profit buyers. However, if BU sold the apartments to the Liberty Community Land Trust, then the tenants could become co-owners of their apartment units. In order to ensure their voices were heard, thousands of people called and emailed BU to voice their concerns for the tenants. In addition, numerous tenant organizations showed up at a rally/press conference at Los Angeles's City Hall to push for a tenant bill of rights in order for permanent protections to be in place for all tenants of Los Angeles. Benjamin and other professors helped the tenants by drafting up a letter of support and sending it to BU. Many forces combined to make this happen, and it was a bunch of small changes that caused a substantial improvement in the livelihood of these residents. Benjamin reiterated how we must "ask what you can do to be of service. We energize each other."

Emanuela Kucik Ph.D., faculty fellow for Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, and Brooke Vick Ph.D., Chief Diversity Officer, stated that "We chose Dr. Benjamin as our keynote speaker because her work expands our understanding of the concept of activism and reminds all of us that we can be activists in any and all fields. Often, people equate activism solely with protests and marches and the activism they see on the news and in textbooks, but there is no one way to be an activist. Activism is—or should

be—part of every axis on which our world turns: education, healthcare, law, art and so much more. Put differently -- we can all be activists in our chosen fields, and we can each carry out our activism in unique ways. Through her book, "Viral Justice," Dr. Benjamin reminds us all of how the seemingly small actions we take in our daily lives can translate into widespread, global change and her work reminds us that we can transform the world through our everyday actions."

An anonymous student stated that she didn't really know what to expect when walking into this seminar. "I originally only came for the credit for my anthropology class, but I did end up learning that it's possible for me to be an activist as well. I don't necessarily have to do something elaborate for reform to occur, even small changes have an impact."

Des Suarez '23 expressed similar thoughts, and said, "I learned that we have the power to make change through

the small, daily acts we do—they don't have to be monumental to cause a ripple effect, it only costs one seed for a garden to grow!"

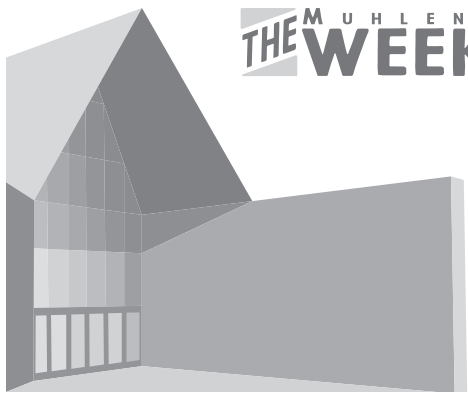
Claire Spenard '23 said, "Benjamin provided so many examples of projects and organizations that do the kind of work that is tangible for anyone to be a part of. Her method of 'viral justice' simplifies social justice work rather than complicates it and I left the talk feeling like being a part of the solution was within reach. She also reminded me that life is an embodied experience which sometimes I forget while being suffocated by academia. I don't need to start projects of my own to be useful, there are people out there doing the work and the most important thing that I can do is find them and help with and uplift their work."

## FROM HOUSEKEEPING PAGE 1

Despite some complaints, HRL encourages students to help keep their residence halls clean to ease the burden on housekeeping staff and make their jobs easier, especially amidst staffing shortages. The best ways that students can help are by taking out their own trash and cleaning up after themselves in common areas. Should any issues with cleanliness arise, HRL asks that students report concerns immediately so they can be resolved quickly and ensure a pleasant residential experience for all students. Lastly, it is

important to recognize that housekeeping staff are a part of the Muhlenberg community, and students are encouraged to learn their housekeeper's name and personally thank them for their work.





"Keep your eyes on the finish line and not on the turmoil around you"

- Rihanna

## 'Berg students compete in NATS



PHOTO BY ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR MADDIE CILIENTO '25.

BY ANNA BOBOK  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On Saturday Feb. 11, students from throughout the Lehigh Valley came to Muhlenberg to showcase their talents in the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) student auditions. Held throughout the Baker Center for the Arts from 8:00am to 2:00pm, the day brought invaluable experience to these vocalists and accompanists while also sparking new interest in Muhlenberg from outside our small population.

NATS is an organization dedicated to the well-being of voice teachers across the country, both academically and personally. Trisha Budlong, a member of the Muhlenberg voice faculty and NATS, explained that they offer resources for teaching as well as health insurance, "which is significant as the vast majority of voice teachers, despite holding advanced degrees, are not in full time teaching positions at the university level, so do not have access to benefits through their employers." Membership also allows students to participate in auditions each year.

When registering for auditions, stu-

dents choose a category to compete in based on their preferred style of music and age range. They then choose two or three songs in that style that showcase the breadth of their talent through contrasting characters, languages and/or tempos. For the actual audition, the student performs all of their songs with an accompanist for a panel of three judges. The judges then deliberate the winners for their category, who are given a monetary award and the chance to perform for all students involved. All student auditioners walk away with the benefit of written feedback from the judges. They then may discuss this feedback at their lessons as a springboard for improvement.

Valentina Nazzaro '23, a winner in the commercial music category, found it more rewarding to think of NATS as practice than performance: "I didn't really look at it as a 'competition' as much as an opportunity for me to get more experience singing in front of some sort of audience and on top of this being able to get professional feedback and suggestions on my work. I also loved being able to perform songs that eventually I will be singing in front of an even more intimate crowd at my senior recital in April."

Auditionee Sabrina Vitale '23 agreed,

stating, "Although it is a competition in nature, it is a phenomenal way to practice performance for students who may not have a ton of performance opportunities at the moment. I, personally, struggle with auditioning, so entering NATS allows me to confront that and get better in the process."

This year was historic for Lehigh Valley (LV) NATS and Muhlenberg's participation, as it is the first time the event has been held somewhere besides Moravian University in at least ten years, according to faculty participants. Accompanist Vincent Trovato, who has been helping with LV NATS throughout the years, loved the change, and not just for the sake of familiarity: "I've always done it at Moravian and I have memories of running from one floor to another, which was exhausting." According to Budlong, Moravian's facilities and parking had always been an issue, specifically for pianists, and it seems that the change in location helped make the day run smoother.

NATS Student Auditions had benefits that extended beyond the auditionees and accompanists into the Muhlenberg and Lehigh Valley communities. While auditions are happening each year, auditionees and music students are encour-

NATS students prepare for a long but exciting day of auditions in the Center for the Arts.

aged to attend a masterclass. This year's was entitled "Well Canto - Mental Fitness for Singers," which is described as an opportunity to "explore insights and apply practical tools that help maintain a state of well-being while developing awareness of how we think, feel and behave."

Students from other colleges and those competing in the middle and high school divisions also had the opportunity to experience Muhlenberg's facilities and learn about our programs through LV NATS. Vitale experienced this firsthand: "I was even asked about our arts facility by other participating students from Cedar Crest who were curious about the amount of performance spaces we had and the productions we were putting on this semester. They even mentioned that they came to see a few departmental productions last semester and plan to return."

Nazzaro believes more people should participate in the auditions in the future: "...think of it as something you're doing for yourself simply because you love singing! And more importantly sing with your soul and really feel the music you are singing. At the end of the day it's better to jump at an opportunity that scares you than not do it at all! What's the worst that can happen?"



# Surviving Picasso:

## *A mistress who made it out*

BY ALMARAH URMAN  
STAFF WRITER

On Thursday, Feb. 9, the Martin Art Gallery hosted a screening of the 1996 movie *Surviving Picasso*. Directed by James Ivory, the film is told through the eyes of one of Pablo Picasso's many lovers, Françoise Gilot, with whom he had two children. She was his only lover who managed to leave him and live a life unbroken by him, hence the film's title. Prints of Gilot's paintings and work are currently displayed in the gallery, inspiring the screening.

Picasso (Anthony Hopkins) and Gilot's (Natascha McEhlhorne) relationship was anything but perfect, and the film reflects that. It draws inspiration from the book "Picasso: Creator and Destroyer" by Arianna Stassinopoulous, which itself gathers inspiration from Gilot's memoir, "Life With Picasso," which documents the many hardships of their life together. Hopkins was not able to attain the rights to Gilot's memoir directly, but the film depicts her struggle effectively nonetheless.

Gilot met Picasso when she was 21 and he was 61 in 1943. She was a young, beautiful, aspiring artist and he was a rich and world-renowned painter well-known for using gorgeous women as his muse. He quickly replaced his previous muse, Dora Marr (Julianne Moore) with Gilot. When they were further into their relation-



PHOTO FROM "SURVIVING PICASSO"

*Surviving Picasso* screened in the Martin Art Gallery on February 9th.

ship, Gilot would discover the extreme length of the list of women Picasso had scorned. In the beginning, however, she was a young woman whose father wanted her to go to law school while she wanted to study art. Naturally, she took up an apprenticeship with Picasso, moving in with her grandmother after being disowned by her father.

During this apprenticeship, their relationship quickly grew romantic and sexual, their feelings for each other being the subject of many of their paintings. Picasso, not wanting to keep Gilot in Paris, would move her around to live in various places throughout the European coun-

tryside. Essentially, anything to keep her away from his main business hub.

Gilot and Picasso spent a decade together, never marrying as he remained legally bound to another woman and a child that would do anything for him, despite living in abject poverty. They had two children together, Claude and Paloma. After the death of her grandmother, Gilot broke off their relationship, being the first woman to successfully leave Picasso. After the end of their relationship, he discouraged all the art galleries he had relationships with from buying her work and attempted unsuccessfully to block the publishing of her memoir. She would

subsequently bar their children from attending his funeral.

Since the film is shown through Gilot's eyes, Picasso is painted as a self-assured, egotistical man who got everything he wanted, from women to money and having the whole world at his feet. He repeatedly made women swear their love for him while abjectly refusing to do the same for them. When he grew tired of his muses after a few years, he went from painting them as beautiful creatures of desire to portraying them as horrifying monsters attacking him until he dumped them and moved on to the next, younger woman. He used his power and age to make them do whatever he wanted, then left them sobbing and hopelessly devoted to him once they hit thirty.

*Surviving Picasso* is a bit of a frustrating watch that may leave you screaming "finally" when Gilot finally leaves Picasso. You spend almost the entire film desperate for her to leave him as their relationship is obviously unfair and toxic. After watching, the image of Picasso as a fabulous artist who defined abstract work is tainted, because you know how horrible he was to the people in his personal life. This film, along with Gilot's prints hanging in the Martin Art Gallery, depicts Picasso in a new light, for anyone who wants to engage with them.

# The return of the Great American

## Singles Project

BY DANNY MILKIS  
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

On Saturday Feb. 18, the Great American Singles Project, a satirical concert of anti-love songs presented by the Great American Songbook Project (GASP), occurred in the Red Door. GASP, a group that is still quite young, was conceived and founded by Sarah Gordin '21 in 2018 as a musical ensemble dedicated to making music from the 1920s to the 1960s.

The Great American Singles Project, as a concert, has been around since before the COVID-19 lockdown, with the first iteration taking place in the Fireside Lounge in February, 2019.

The event featured two songs performed by the full ensemble, an arrangement of "Cry Me a River," written by Arthur Hamilton and by staff accompanist Vincent Trovato, and an a cappella arrangement of "Orange Colored Sky," originally written by Milton Delugg and Willie Stein. There were also a number of soloists and duettists, some of whom were accompanied by Trovato, while others used pre-recorded instrumental



PHOTO BY ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR SAM COHEN '26

Members of the Great American Songbook Project singing in their valentines day cabaret: The Great American Singles Project.

tracks.

"I love that everything we do is from the great American songbook era but we can still find outlets for individuality for what we do," explained Assistant Musical Director Abigail Schechter '24. "And regardless of what we do, everyone is able to come together to put on something magical and bring the Muhlenberg community together."

GASP allowed the audience to experience a diverse array of music, including selections from the Rays, Tom Lehrer,

Rodgers & Hammerstein, Marvin Gaye and even more artists.

"The thing I love about this group is that it has a lot of possibilities to take on so many different songs and styles from the period, and I think the music is at the center of why we love the group so much," said Zach Kleiman '25, the current musical director of GASP. "It's a very special era, and the array of material allows us to assemble performances in a way that's goofy and fun."

One of the most poignant aspects of

this concert in particular was that some members had performed in the very first "The Great American Singles Project," while others were experiencing it for the very first time, and the willingness to share in the joy was apparent throughout the entirety of the space, from the performers to the audience members.

"This being my first concert as a group member, I had a great time," said Joe Grisanzio '23. "The audience was great, and it reminded me how much I love this genre of music."

Toward the end of the performance, Kleiman made an announcement to the audience that auditions for both vocalists and instrumentalists would be taking place over the course of the week of Feb. 20, and that group member Anna Holmwood '24 would be stationed by the set of pool tables in the back of the space, holding an audition signup sheet.

"It's been really fun to see the group go from a group of friends to a fully organized club over these past four years. And this concert marks the first of hopefully many as an established club," said former musical director and president Josh Freeman '23.



# Artist Spotlight: Lily Arovas '23

BY DANNY MILKIS  
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

On Friday, Feb. 17, the music department hosted the Class of 1969 Recital Competition, in which a number of advanced student musicians enrolled in music lessons through the department were set to perform in Egner Memorial Chapel. The winner was Lily Arovas '23, a concert pianist who has consistently found ways to share her gift and talent for music through the student performing arts scene on campus.

Arovas began learning piano as a classical musician at the age of eight, and explained that when they entered tenth grade, they began taking the art form even more seriously.

"High School was a big turning point where I switched teachers and I started this whole new trajectory of learning," explained Arovas. "It was a lot more cut-throat, it was a lot more strict, but I was seeing that I was becoming a better musician."

Arovas comes from a very musical family, as both of her parents are "avid classical music fans who grew up playing musical instruments." They describe that their father studies the classical genre, and how that helped her go from "just taking lessons and learning the basics of piano to actually really wanting to be able to produce the music that I was listening to."

"I was so moved by listening to classical music, and I just wanted to be able to elicit that in people, so that's what really drove me to work to build a much more profound craft there," explained Arovas.

At the competition itself, Arovas competed alongside selected vocal musicians, all of whom were accompanied by staff accompanist Vincent Trovato, and Arovas was the only instrumentalist to perform that evening.

"It was short and sweet," explained Arovas. "I was last on the order because the program went in reverse alphabetical order, and overall it was a wonderful experience to perform alongside colleagues who love to make music."

As the winner of the Class of 1969 Competition, Arovas will perform at the honors convocation at the end of the spring 2023 semester, and, like many others in the senior class, has been thinking about their future beyond the halls of Muhlenberg.

"I'm applying to grad school for more research intensive fields like data science and social science and things like that," explained Arovas. "I know I definitely want to preserve my love... for classical music and continue to take lessons and further my craft, even if I don't take it so far as to seek out an educational route."

Arovas continued, "I have performance anxiety, and working with my teachers and working with people in the [music] field to help me muster the poise that would be needed for performance has been incredibly helpful. I know that I don't want to go into the professional concert musicianship world because of all of that stress, but it would still be really nice to keep it as something I can still gain opportunities from."



PHOTO COURTESY OF LILY AROVAS '23

Lily Arovas '23 wins the 1969 recital competition.

## SENIOR PORTRAITS by Ayden

Photos in front of a backdrop  
(good for the yearbook)

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# Semper Fallux

## *The predatory nature of high school military recruiting.*

BY LILY MAGOON  
ASSISTANT OP/ED EDITOR

A few days out of every year, a small table will appear in every public high school cafeteria across the United States. Draped in a gold fringed tablecloth and holding a display of meticulously straightened pamphlets, it heralds the main attraction—the men and women in uniform sitting behind it.

Military recruiters are just one of many attractions that appear during the school year, right alongside the blood drives and food bank donation boxes. But how has it become so normal to walk past a high school senior doing push ups in the hallway with the hopes of impressing the camo behind the table?

The omnipresence of these recruiters is due to a provision in George W. Bush's 2002 "No Child Left Behind Act," designed to strengthen military recruitment. This provision requires high schools to allow military recruiters access to student's private information, or risk losing federal funding. Technically this does require parental consent, but as many schools have an "Opt Out" policy that requires students to specifically decline potential communication, it is easily overlooked—especially by single parent or low-income households.

These families, especially people of

color, are exactly who these recruiters are trying to target. Their best bet for enrollment is to go after students who do not plan on attending a four-year college—often due to financial limitations, a desire to enter the workforce, or further effects of institutionalized inequality. Recruiters will entice these students with an idealistic picture of military life, and exaggerated claims of the monetary and educational benefits—or sometimes leave out important caveats to receiving those benefits.

Even besides these questionable tactics, the simple fact that the military is there gives them the advantage. Many of the underserved kids they're targeting have never been informed that they have other options, let alone how to pursue them.

A 2020 Department of Defense (DoD) poll asked young adults ages 16-21 about their likelihood of becoming involved in the military. When asked for a hypothetical reason for joining, income and funding for future education were the most popular responses at 57 percent and 52 percent respectively, while helping others, bettering the community and bettering themselves were listed by only 31-44 percent of participants. When asked what their top deterrents were, the majority cited fear of physical injury or death and PTSD/psychological damage.

So how much money, exactly, is at stake here?

The starting salary for a newly enlisted member of the military is around \$21,000 annually, as of the 2023 Military Pay Table, plus additional stipends and benefits, and increases with rank. The college benefits so many join the military to seek require a

complete honorable discharge to qualify. This does not include medical or general discharge, a fact that is not often advertised to new recruits before they join up.

In comparison, an automotive mechanic earning in the bottom 10 percent made around \$29,000 a year as of 2021. These individuals likely have not completed any degree or certification programs, which many states do not require to begin working as a mechanic. Those who do, can expect to pay anywhere from \$5,000 over a period of as little as six months for online certifications, to \$20,000 over two years for an Associate's Degree. Once they enter the field with a degree, they will make an average of \$46,000, with the potential to earn up to \$75,000.

While significantly less than a typical four-year college, the cost of these programs is still a concern for many people for whom saving up is not an option. Fortunately, there are many grants and scholarships available for these programs, at both a national and state level, and some employers, such as Ford, will pay a certain amount towards your tuition if you're seeking a degree or certification that puts you ahead in your field.

This is of course not to say that pursuing a trade will always be a more desirable alternative to joining the military. There's family legacy, personal values and any number of other motivating factors that might lead someone to seek a career in the armed forces. But, if as the DoD poll suggests, money and the promise of an education are the primary motivating factors for many of America's young people to join up, then it's time we start prioritizing educating high schoolers on all of their options, so every student can make

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor (bergweeklyoped@gmail.com) or the Editor-in-Chief (weeklyeditor@gmail.com) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.

the right—fully informed—decision on what to do when they graduate.

# How the TikTok Algorithm Can Be Your Biggest Cyberbully

BY MEGAN HANSEN  
ASSISTANT OP/ED EDITOR

The year 2020 was a tough one for everyone. The world was plagued not only with disease, but with a case of cabin fever unlike any other. Boredom swept the globe, and streets became desolate as we all sat, snug in our beds, with nothing to do but scroll mindlessly on our phones. Technology and social media became a form of escape for people of all ages, and for an app like TikTok, this was more than ideal. I was one of millions of teenagers at the time who downloaded the app to occupy my time during isolation. Flash forward to 2023, and TikTok is the one of the most popular apps by far. Its rapid rise to popularity during the pandemic has left a lasting impression, as there are offi-

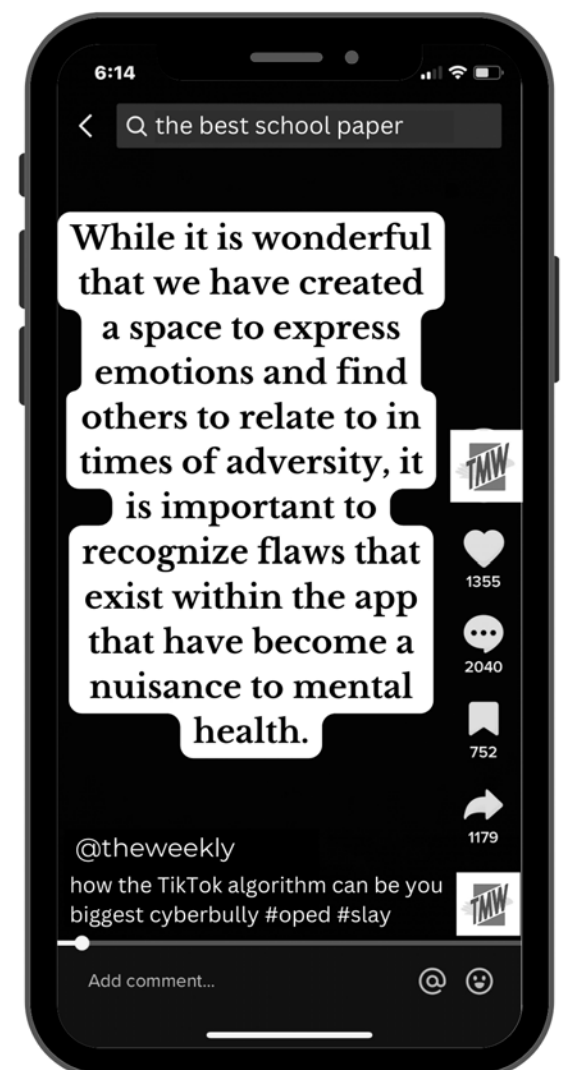
cially over 1 billion users according to Wallaroo Media's statistics as of Feb. 16.

Like many social media platforms before, TikTok has become a strong community for its users. Very often on the app, people facilitate meaningful conversations, whether it be about the terrifying issues prominent in the world, or individual struggles. What started as a predominantly dance and humor centered app has shapeshifted into an online open forum, where people can share any opinion or experience that they want. During a year of sickness, political divide, economic struggles and more, this was extremely useful to many people, and it is a trend that has stuck around three years later. Scrolling through my For You Page, I see white blurbs of text layered over a trending sound way more often than I see

happy people dancing around to a catchy song.

While it is wonderful that we have created a space to express emotions and find others to relate to in times of adversity, it is important to recognize the flaws within the app that have become detrimental to mental health. This is because of the TikTok algorithm.

The algorithm was a main contributor to the app's sudden success. In short, it pays attention to what videos you as a user like or interact with, and in turn shows similar videos. However, this system does not always cater to your enjoyment. For me personally, it has had a major effect on my mindset. Let's say that I am scrolling through my For You Page, and I see one of those white text videos of someone rant-



SEE **TikTok** PAGE 9

CREATED BY AYDEN LEVINE '23



*Tiny horoscopes for a tiny campus*

MICRO-ASTROLOGY

*Weekly advice and predictions*

Communicated to The Weekly staff by Victor’s Lament

BY ORION  
ASSISTANT OP-ED EDITOR

Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)

Not you intellectualizing your emotions instead of feeling them!

Pisces (February 19 – March 20)

Careful, your crazy is showing. Cover it up with a thinly veiled metaphor—that always works!

Aries (March 21 – April 19)

Ignoring that text won’t make it go away... but changing your name and moving to Canada sure will!

Taurus (April 20 – May 20)

You still feel bad about not actually reading that book for seventh grade English. It’s time to let it go, and feel bad about the reading you didn’t do for class today instead.

Gemini (May 21 – June 20)

You dramatically announce to your friends that you caught feelings, but it turns out you were the last one to know.

Cancer (June 21 – July 22)

You’re going to push on a ‘pull’ door. It’ll be ok, walk it off and cry in the show-

er later.

Leo (July 23 – August 22)

Remember, the only thing standing between you and that elevated surface is yourself.

Virgo (August 23 – September 22)

Less thinking, more property destruction. For legal reasons this is a joke

Libra (September 23 – October 22)

You’re going to have to catch a spider and move it outside. Just telling you now so you can emotionally prepare yourself.

Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)

You know what it never was? That deep.

Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)

Embrace your true self. Don’t let the long moments overtake the little moments you love so much.

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

You know what they say: that’s what you get for waking up in Benfer!



shapeshifter

BY KEANNA PEÑA  
COPY EDITOR

i believe i know who i am  
a girl who reaches  
on her tipitoes  
for  
attention  
whose fingertips  
softly kiss the top  
of your collar  
i believe i know who i am  
but then  
i shapeshift  
i become cruel  
an opportunist  
against  
you twisting  
your words  
a window  
clouded with soot  
i yank your collar  
we are now eye-level  
i shapeshift  
into  
a snake  
slither  
on top of you

chain your neck  
bite  
sink my teeth into  
skin drink your blood  
spit  
you out  
i shape shift  
into me again  
but is it really me  
if muck and veins  
stain my teeth  
if i dream of  
fires licking  
your smile  
if i begin to yearn  
for this feeling  
of selfishness  
i shapeshift  
i wink  
i shapeshift  
i laugh  
i shapeshift  
i know  
who  
i am

FROM **TikTok** PAGE 8

ing about an issue that has been plaguing my mind. This could be a variety of things depending on the person: body image issues, anxiety, depression, etc. Great, I’ve found someone I can relate to! I like the video because I’m happy to find someone with similar struggles, and I also want to let them know that they’re not alone. Suddenly, the next time I open the app, my page is flooded with hundreds of videos about whatever I’m struggling with. It becomes all I am consuming, and all that I am talking about.

This, to me, defeats the original purpose of the app: escapism. While it is important to confront the issues that have been stressors in our lives, we also can not let them consume us more than they already have. Our brains become full with dark clouds with no room for any other thoughts. It quite simply is not healthy. While a simple solution would be to delete the app, it can also be hard to leave behind the original fun and distraction that the app brought during a troubling time. It is like a toxic relationship that you just can not leave.

It is important as the youth of the modern era to practice healthy media habits. To reject media as a whole is unnecessary, since it is so prominent in our livelihoods. For me personally, I find solace in music and writing. Focusing on creativity provides a distraction to fix-

ate on in lieu of social media platforms. There are many existing alternatives that declutter the mind, and redirect your energy in a more positive light: exercising, reading, hanging out with friends, etc.

As for alternatives for the sense of community, this can be hard to find. Media is safe for many because they are comfortable with anonymity. To this I say, do what makes you comfortable. Everyone has different needs, and perhaps space from media and time with yourself can help you become more familiar with yours.

No matter what, in a world where the internet rules our lives, healthy scrolling habits must become a form of self care as normalized as brushing your teeth. If you find yourself falling down a rabbit hole of negative media, remember that the algorithm is designed to entertain you. If it is not accomplishing this, it is okay to take a break!



PHOTO COURTESY OF KEANNA PEÑA '25



# A COLLEGE-SIZED CHASM

## *The student-athlete perspective*

BY EVAN SCHLOTTERBECK  
STAFF EDITOR

Being a small liberal arts college, Muhlenberg students are urged to find communities to join within the institution as soon as they step foot on campus. This engagement could take several forms, as Muhlenberg has many different groups and organizations on campus that are always excited to recruit and welcome new members.

Some of the most prominent communities on campus are athletics and performing arts programs. Based on Muhlenberg's encouragement for their students to get involved on campus with the vastness of extracurricular opportunities, it would make sense to think the biggest student-driven groups would attempt to integrate as many members of the Muhlenberg community as they can. Unfortunately, that is not necessarily the case.

In the case of student-athletes, it is clear they are cognizant of this separation. "I definitely think that there's a division between non-athletes and athletes on campus," said track & field thrower Erica Borbi '24. "I would say the biggest divide is between the athletes and the performing arts students."

This social partition could be attributed to various factors. Student-athletes immediately have a group on campus to interact with, hindering the desire to extend their greetings to other students. "There is a lot of psychological data on the importance of social groups and social bonding," said Department Chair of Psychology Stefanie Sinno, Ph.D. "So we know, there's enough psychology research to note that athletes, particularly



Victor's Lament stands as a representation of something all Muhlenberg students have in common.

PHOTO BY ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR MADDIE CILIENTO '25

when they first start college, will congregate together because they're building social bonds among their sports. We also see the same for sororities, clubs and programming."

Student-athletes also have a lot to balance with practices and workouts almost every day. "I believe the biggest separation between student-athletes and non-athletes is with people's time management," said tight end Zaki Williams '26. "Everyone is on completely different schedules and rarely gets to interact outside of classes."

Issues of social identity for student-athletes are something to consider as well. "Their identification is as athletes,"

said Sinno. "I think lots of humans find their identity markers and feel most comfortable with others in their identity. The challenge of only hanging with or talking with others of your same identity is that you miss out on diverse perspectives."

Lastly, another component of this puzzle may be as simple as individual interest. Each student has hobbies or passions that could be unique to them or shared among other students, and it is safe to say athletes have a self-spoken enthusiasm for their sport. These alienations in interests could be a catalyst in this unspoken fissure, but regardless, a unified campus is a better community. "I think we would definitely have a stronger campus culture

if groups supported each other," said Borbi. Student-athletes love supporting other student-athletes, and the same can be said of members within other groups on campus, but the line seems to be drawn there.

Whether you are a student-athlete or not, the next time you see a poster for an a capella performance, an Instagram post about a play-off soccer game, or an email from a club you were thinking about joining—consider attending. Refusing to try, however, is what is preventing and will continue to split the Muhlenberg student population.

## Four overtimes

*Intramural basketball was electric for Muhlenberg's teams.*

BY WILLIAM LLOSA  
STAFF WRITER

Two B-league teams were scheduled to play their opening game, and everyone was excited to get started. However, when the teams arrived at the gym, they found out that the court they were supposed to play on was being used for an A-league game. The game had gone into quadruple overtime between the Deep Strokerzz vs. Village. The players from the two B-league teams, Hot Sauce and O-Line, were disappointed at first as the game entered its second overtime, but that quickly turned into excitement to see what was about to happen next. Towards the end of the second overtime, a game-tying three was hit by a member of Deep Strokerzz, and everyone knew they were in for an entertaining third. It was an in-

tense matchup, with both teams playing at a high level, and the crowd could not take their eyes off the action.

Josh Benson '24 is on the tennis team at Muhlenberg and plays intramural basketball for the B-League team Hot Sauce. When he arrived early for his game, he described the ongoing game as "Crazy. My old RA, Josh Cabral ['23], went off. He was dunking and everything," said Benson.

The possible game winner at the end of the third overtime just grazed the rim and bounced away. The refs decided that the "next shot wins" for the deciding basket, which, after a few possessions, a player from Village hit with a floater.

"I felt so bad for [Cabral] because he couldn't quite get the win, but he was really trying his heart out, which is about all you can do; you just put your body on the line, see what you can get, and play your heart out, and both teams were able to do that, and it was really thrilling to [watch them] win. It was part of me that wished they could have gone to one more overtime, so he could have seen more drama there," lamented Benson.

Intramural basketball is off and run-



Intramural basketball players enjoy the atmosphere of a non-competitive and fun environment.

ning, and the first day didn't disappoint in terms of competitiveness and entertainment.

Benson added, "Intramural basketball is a great way to have fun, but there is still

some competition, and it is with good friends; you know, I can hang out with a bunch of cool people that [I] get to spend

SEE **OVERTIMES** PAGE 11

PHOTO BY WILLIAM LLOSA '23



# Women's tennis working towards future success

BY CAITI KINNEN  
STAFF WRITER

On Saturday, Feb. 18, the Muhlenberg women's tennis team began their season with their first match of the spring semester against Swarthmore College. In the fall season, the Mules showed promise with a strong win against Cedar Crest College, sweeping their competition 9-0 in September. Muhlenberg women's tennis traveled to nationally-ranked Swarthmore for a tough match. Swarthmore's women's tennis team is currently ranked 28th out of the nation's top 40, and has not lost to Muhlenberg since 2015. Unfortunately, the mules could not break Swarthmore's winning streak on Saturday.

Although Muhlenberg suffered a 9-0 loss, the team is keeping their heads up as they look forward to the rest of the season. "We're disappointed about the result of the match and we're hoping for better, but for being a new team, we competed well against an experienced program. Now we have a handle on things that we do well and some things we need to improve," reflected Captain Malin Hermanson '23.

Results aside, Muhlenberg put up a good fight. The closest matches were seen from Caitlin Bestrycki '26 at the #4 singles position and Giulia Gerschel '23 at the #3 singles slot. "A standout on Saturday was Giulia Gerschel, she kept up with her opponent and played a great match," stated Hermanson.

The Mules are ready to keep working hard this season while keeping a positive mindset. "Some final thoughts are that we're excited to keep competing. Every match we learn new things about our performance under pressure. This competitive mindset is something that you can't replicate in practice," discussed Hermanson.

This excitement and competitive outlook is likely to pay off as the Mules continue their difficult start to the season in a couple weeks with a home match at the Dietrich Field House on Mar. 4. Muhlenberg will go up against Johns Hopkins University, the Centennial Conference's other nationally-ranked team at #25 in



PHOTO COURTESY OF MALIN HERMANSON '23

Captain Malin Hermanson '23 is excited for the year ahead.

the nation.

After that, the match schedule picks up with another home match after Spring Break on Mar. 23. Muhlenberg plans to

play at Kern Field Courts against Bryn Athyn College, a team that they beat 9-0 last year. A full schedule of matches follows, with other exciting opportunities to

compete and likely victories to come for Muhlenberg women's tennis.

## FROM OVERTIMES PAGE 10

time with through intramurals," said Benson.

Intramural basketball is divided into two leagues, A and B, with varying levels of competitiveness. The differences are in the level of competitiveness, "There definitely is some more competition in A League," says Benson. "I mean, the B League's not quite a competitive league in terms of the level of skill people have and their sort of desire to win."

In the following game between Hot Sauce and O-line there was 47 seconds left, Hot Sauce was up by three. Players

from the previous A-League game stayed to watch. O-Line needed a three badly and kept jacking up triples and getting offensive rebound after offensive rebound. Until finally, with about ten seconds left, the ball was rebounded by a defensive player who was fouled. Following a missed free throw number one, the offensive line was able to attempt two more three-pointers but were unable to capitalize and ultimately fell short. "It's always stressful when you see a game come down to the wire and you're on one of the teams," said Benson. "It definitely was an intense time, but I really thought I knew that we had it in us to win. We were pro-

tecting the paint a little bit, which they had been a little bit more dominant in as opposed to three-point shooting. It was a much better strategy, it felt like we were really forcing them to work for it by forcing them to shoot those long-range, low-probability shots."

Cabral shared, "I love playing basketball. I've been playing ever since middle school. Intramural basketball is fun but also competitive, and there's a great atmosphere. What I like the most is seeing all the different people that play in the league, from guys on the soccer team to footballers and lacrosse players to people who aren't on sports teams. Our first

game this season went into quadruple overtime. That just goes to show how competitive the league is. It was a great game and a lot of fun! That atmosphere in that game felt like a playoff championship game; it was really cool!"



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## Double playoffs

*Both Muhlenberg basketball teams hope to go on a run.*

BY JOSH BOTEL  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Both Muhlenberg basketball teams are going to the Centennial Conference playoffs this year. Last season, neither team made the playoffs or had winning records, but both teams had extreme improvement this season, were able to avoid injuries and are building off of recent hot streaks.

The women's basketball team is currently on a three-game winning streak while winning four of their last five, with their most recent win at home against Washington College. They currently have a 13-12 overall record, with an impressive 12-8 record in conference. "This is a young team that we thought would grow and come together well by the end of the season. That was our goal, to be playing our best down the stretch and into the post-season and we have accomplished that. We have won 5 of our final 7 games, with five of those games versus play-off teams. We have won close games and come from behind games, so we should be well-prepared for the playoffs this week," said Coach Ron Rohn, who is in his 21st season as head women's basketball coach.

Rohn has had success when he has reached the playoffs, winning ten Centennial Conference championships during his tenure at Muhlenberg. "Our goal all season was to reach this point. Get a playoff spot and be playing well enough at the end of the season to know we can beat anyone. We have competed well against the other playoff teams, and I know the team feels that if we play to our highest level, we can beat anyone in the tournament," said Rohn.

"After having such a strong finish to the regular season, we're very excited to be entering the postseason. We've had a different experience in each of our last three games, which is really valuable going into playoffs because we've shown what we can do. At F&M, it was a close game all the way through and we were able to hold on for a win. At Ursinus, both teams made some runs in scoring but we fought through two overtimes to win. Then on Saturday against Washington, we overcame a 19 point first quarter deficit to



PHOTO COURTESY OF LOUIS COCCO '23

The Women's and Men's Basketball teams prepare for playoffs.

win by double digits. Being able to get the job done in each of those scenarios gives the team a lot of confidence going into the playoffs, so we're very excited," said Margaux Eripret '22.

"Our team will keep practicing and playing hard. We have been doing the same thing all season, but it feels like now it's coming together really well. We just have to trust the process and each other into the postseason," said Ava Connolly '25 who is looking forward to the potential playoff run.

The men's basketball team is currently on a five game winning streak going into the postseason, with their most recent win also against Washington College at home. They are the fourth seed with their first opponent being at home against Ursinus. "As we prepare for a potential postseason run, we will stick to following

the same process that we have used all year. Our daily commitment to pursuing progress is what has put us in a position to make a postseason run and so we will strive to use that same daily commitment to pursuing progress to fuel us throughout the remainder of this season," said Kevin Hopkins, who is in his fifth year as the men's basketball head coach.

"Our guys have had the same approach to each and every game that we have played this season. We have challenged our guys to be the most committed, connected and competitive individuals and team that we can be each and every day as we strive to meet our non-negotiable standards that we have set for ourselves within our program. Our success has been a result of the compound interest that has come from our daily process of pursuing progress not perfection," said Hopkins

when talking about how they can continue their recent hot streak into the post-season.

A standout from the team this year was when they broke the single game record in the Centennial Conference for best three point percentage by a team in a single game. The teams shot 63.3 percent from three that game. Another standout performance from the season is when Dan Gaines '22 got a career high 35 points in the final season of his incredible career.

In the first round of conference playoffs on Tues, Feb. 21, the women's team unfortunately lost to Haverford 46-58 which will mark the end of their 2022-23 season. The men's team beat Ursinus 74-53 and will continue on their playoff journey to the conference championship.

Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Feb. 23 - Mar. 1

### Men's Lacrosse



Fri, Feb. 24 @ 6:00 p.m.  
Scotty Wood Stadium

### Men's Tennis



Sat, Feb. 25 @ 10:00 a.m.  
Swarthmore, Pa.

### Track and Field



Sat, Feb. 25 @ 10:30 a.m.  
Lancaster, Pa.

### Softball



Sat, Feb. 25 @ 1:00 p.m.  
Union, N.J.



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Students process the "national day of hate."  
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### ARTS & CULTURE

The Lehigh Valley's art scene according to the artists.  
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### OP/ED

The scary link between warm weather and gun violence.  
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### SPORTS

'Berg Basketball competes in Centennial Conference.  
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## "Love and Information" debuts

*read more on page 6*



PHOTO BY MARCO CALDERON

PHOTO BY PHOTO EDITOR SHAIYAN FEISAL '26

## Black History Month celebration highlights students being agents of change

BY SHAIYAN FEISAL  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

The Office of Multicultural Life (OML), Black Students Association (BSA) and the Men of Color Network hosted their annual celebration of Black History Month (BHM) on Sunday Feb. 26 in the Event Space with the theme of Black activism. The event's objective was to showcase how music, dance, art and spoken word can honor Black community members who have made an impact in promoting an inclusive and equitable campus environment.

Robin Riley-Casey, director of the Office of Multicultural Life and associate dean of students, said, "The Celebration is an annual event that provides affirmations and words of support to Black community members—that their work and presence is valuable." The event kicked off with a welcome address by president of the BSA Bianca Bolt '23 followed by a performance from Rejoice! Gospel Choir led by Eric Thompson '10. Then, Richeta

Cubano '24 started off her Poet Unity (poetry and community) segment by asking the audience, "What do you love about being Black?" While some audience members talked about their food, their hair and their culture, Cubano emphasized that she cherishes "walking into a room and feeling pure and genuine Black love. It's seeing unity, seeing restoration and seeing revolutionary Black love." Cubano encouraged Black people in the audience with the last few verses of her poem: "Your melanin radiates rooms/You take up space with your power and grace/And you are destined to be all that you set out to be. You will not be trapped in any box of restrictions/but I set you free to be the king and queen you were meant to be/You are loved, you are beautiful, you are worthy. Hey Black people, I love you, did you know that?"

The keynote speaker was Emanuela Kucik, Ph.D., assistant professor of English & Africana studies, inaugural faculty fellow for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

& Belonging (DEIB) initiatives, Africana studies director and staff advisor for BSA. Her talk was titled "Dreams of the Unrealistic," and Kucik explained that "dreams are not a lofty ideal we cannot obtain, but rather as a seed of true activism precisely because dreams untether us from the reality that we are supposed to claim." Addressing how students can become involved with activism, Kucik highlighted that "the beginning, and honestly, the entirety of activism, is rooted in your individual dreams. In your belief of all you can do in a world that tells you that reality limits your possibilities. Your activism, which will look different from the person sitting next to you, is rooted [in] who you are and what you envision for yourself and for the world."

One key part of her speech was centered on the need to disregard the myth that one person cannot make change. Kucik stressed that "[Frederick] Douglas's unrealistic dream of abolition inspired Dr. King's unrealistic vision of desegregation

that inspired Toni Morrison's unrealistic vision of a world that centered Black women's experiences. I'm not speaking of their dreams to overwhelm you with thinking that we can never do what they did, I'm speaking of their dreams to remind us all that they framed their hopes and their goals as dreams precisely because they were told their visions were impossible in this world. But they dared to imagine otherwise. I am speaking of their dreams to remind you that the very notion of Black freedom was once a dream pin-nacled as unrealistic. A celebration like this one, an integrated room celebrating Blackness, was deemed unrealistic even in the most recent decades. More than anything, I am speaking of their dreams to remind you of your own." She concluded her speech saying, "Together we can be the unrealistic dream that wakes the world while it sleeps."

Zaleeae Sierra, a 19-year-old who is the youth coordinator at

**SEE CELEBRATION PAGE 4**



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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We request that advertising material be submitted by the Monday preceding publication at 5 p.m. If materials have not been received at that time, the advertisement will not run and the advertiser is still responsible for 100% payment. We reserve the right to decline any advertisement that is misleading, inaccurate, fraudulent, or deemed generally unacceptable. This determination will be made by the Business Staff in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief. The Muhlenberg Weekly maintains a distinction between its news & editorial content and advertising. As such, advertisements will not be accepted if they imitate the general style of The Weekly, intentionally or unintentionally. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: headlines, bylines, fonts, and column-arrangements. In order to make this distinction, The Weekly also reserves the right to include the word "advertisement" on any advertisement that is deemed too native.

# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

## 2/20/23

Property Damage—Report of accidental damage to a TV screen in Fahy commons

## 2/21/23

Alarms—Report of fire alarm from cooking in Trexler Library, system silenced and reset

Traffic—Report to jump start vehicle on Chew Street, Campus Safety successfully started vehicle

Injured Student—Report of injured student at Scotty Wood stadium, MC EMS responded, student refused further treatment or transport

## 2/23/23

Unsecure area—Report of propped door on Gordon and 22nd street, area checked, no further incident

Traffic—Report of vehicle illegally parked in the Front drive.

Injured Student—Report of injured student, Allentown EMS responded and transported student to hospital

Traffic—Report to jump-start vehicle at the Village, Campus Safety successfully started vehicle

Alarms—Report of fire alarm from cooking in South hall, system silenced and reset

## 2/24/23

Traffic—Report of vehicle illegally parked with excessive amount of tickets at Baker Center for the Arts, vehicle booted by Campus Safety Officer

Suspicious Activity—Report of suspicious activity in Prosser Hall, investigation to continue

## 2/25/23

Unsecure Area—Report of door found open on Chew Street, area checked, no further incident

Information—Point of information report of wires down at the Keck house lot

Alarms—Report of fire alarm from fog machine in Seegers Union, system silenced and reset

Injured Student—Report of injured student at a MILE house, student refused further treatment or transport

# Luck O' the Irish Meal Packages

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Choose from our selection of Irish favorites, including corned beef, shepard's pie, cabbage and potatoes, green velvet cupcakes, Irish soda bread, and much more!  
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# ‘Berg hosts award-winning political scientists in a discussion about representation

BY KATHERINE CONLON  
MANAGING EDITOR

On Feb. 21, Muhlenberg’s Political Science department held the “Women, Representation & the 2022 Elections” webinar as a part of their 2022 midterm election series. The event’s speakers included Professor of Political Science at Hartwick College Laurel Elder, Ph.D., and Professor of Government and Chair of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program at Georgetown University Nadia Brown, Ph.D. Elder’s book “The Partisan Gap” and Brown’s work “Sisters in the Statehouse: Black Women and Legislative Decision Making” and “Sister Style: The Politics of Appearance for Black Women Political Elites” have won awards for their advancement in the field. The webinar was moderated by Professor of Political Science Lanethea Mathews-Schultz, Ph.D.

Elder began the talk with a presentation about her research. Her primary research question examines why Republican women have a harder time getting elected than their Democratic counterparts. Elder noted several reasons why this might be the case including the fact that women have a more difficult time viewing themselves as elected officials,



PHOTO BY KATHERINE CONLON '24

Lanethea Mathews-Schultz, Ph.D., Laurel Elder, Ph. D. and Nadia Brown, Ph.D., discuss representation in politics.

that the two parties are more ideologically polarized than ever, there have been regional and racial realignments within the parties and both parties have contrasting power structures. Elder noted that “this dramatic partisan gap among women in elected office is likely to remain a characteristic of our politics for I think probably decades to come. I think the partisan gap grew bigger in 2022, despite it being a good year for Republicans.”

Brown’s work explores similar topics on representation but focuses on what

she calls the “politics of appearance,” specifically in relation to Black female political elites. Beginning her talk, Brown expressed how she was discouraged by her advisors during graduate school to study Black women politicians. She explains that this was because, according to her advisors, “Black women political elites look all the same on paper.” Brown decided to counter this by centering her writings on the political impact of Black women’s hair. According to Brown, voters have “cues about what they think a Black

woman will do when they’re elected to office based on their hair texture and their hairstyle. So, if they have a more Afrocentric hairstyle which are locs or braids, they’re seen as being more Afrocentric than if they have straight hair.” According to Brown, hair as an aspect of identity provides both agency and pre-determinism; with individuals having a genetic predisposition for their hair type but also the agency to alter their hair. Brown is also a big advocate for Black women’s representation in the field of political science, noting that their experiences often go unappreciated in this sect of academia.

The webinar concluded with a Q&A portion where students were allowed to submit questions for the speakers. The group discussed the lasting impacts of the Supreme Court’s Dobbs decision, former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley’s presidential campaign and Vice President Kamala Harris’s low approval ratings.

AJ Henley ‘24, a student in Gender, Politics & Policy, expressed their thoughts on the event saying, “the webinar was insightful. I already knew a fair amount of what they were talking about from our class, but I appreciated both guests providing more details of their research.”

## New beginnings in communications for Bill Keller

BY SINHAYANA SRINIVASAN  
STAFF WRITER

Bill Keller, a faculty member at Muhlenberg, will be leaving to pursue a new position at Franklin & Marshall College. Keller began his long journey at Muhlenberg 13 years ago, where he first joined the office of public relations, which was later renamed the office of communications. His primary responsibilities were social media and website content, which slowly morphed into storytelling and internal communications over the years. He also became heavily involved in visual and digital media creation, media relations and crisis management.

Keller not only worked in the various fields listed above, but was also part of planning major college events, such as commencement, opening and honors convocations and Summer Advising. He not only planned administrative events, but assisted with musical performances like Candlelight Carols and more.

Keller completed both his undergraduate and graduate studies in professional writing, which prioritized business writing, marketing and strategic communications. “I really enjoy working with other people and acting in collaboration to solve problems,” shared Keller.

Keller stated that he is, “most proud of the team that I helped recruit and bring to the College.” His office was involved in so many aspects of everyday life at Muhlenberg. They helped in storytelling

as mentioned before, in event support and even extended to management and operation of WMUH and marketing of theater and dance. The office supported planning, preparations and response for emergencies and championed the efforts of Muhlenberg’s athletic teams and student athletes.

Keller shared that he was fortunate enough to have worked across a huge variety of projects during his time at Muhlenberg, saying that “exposure to and participation in so many aspects of higher education has shaped my understanding of how different offices and individuals work together to achieve common goals. It’s also helped me build friendships from nearly every team and department on campus.”

Keller’s time at Muhlenberg no doubt had a big impact on him. “Muhlenberg represents a huge part of my life history and defines many of the relationships that I value most,” said Keller. “I’ve grown, evolved and improved my ability as a communicator as a result of the challenges I have faced with the projects my team managed, but we successfully navigated through them, and I’ll always appreciate the folks who have been with me for that journey.”

His last day at Muhlenberg will be Mar. 2, and for him, Muhlenberg will always be a huge part of his life. Keller’s life partner, Megan Keller, also works at Muhlenberg. She is part of the Office of Health Professions Advising, and their young daughter,

Cora, is quite possibly Marti the Mule’s biggest fan. Keller excitedly said how, “I have no doubt we’ll be back on campus for many events in the coming years! I’ll continue to follow the incredible accomplishments of Muhlenberg students, faculty, staff and alumni online, in the magazine and on social media. I am already looking up Centennial Conference schedules to see when I can watch the Muhlenberg Mules visit Lancaster to compete against Franklin & Marshall Diplomats.”

Keller will not only be missed by his colleagues but also by members of the student body. Ben Eber ‘23 expressed the impact Keller has had on his Muhlenberg experience saying, “He’s a warm and kind face in the community that has helped show students new opportunities. Over the summer, the office of communications wanted to see Muhlenberg students engaging with the community, so he took me all around downtown and showed me new coffee shops I’d never been to and new restaurants to check out. He took me to the Allentown art museum. It was really fun interacting with and working with him. It’s a rare but fun way to interact with the school.”

Ayden Levine ‘23 stated “I’ve had the pleasure of working with Bill. It’s so clear how much he does for this school. He is dedicated to ensuring the memories made at this school are unmatched. I will really miss working with him.”

Eber continued, “He’s a really warm person, it comes so naturally working

with him. He’s a great mentor to other photographers working with him and to other hobbyists. Whether you’re a new photographer or a hobbyist, he’ll talk shop with you. He will be missed.”

Keller is going to join Franklin & Marshall as the assistant vice president for advancement marketing & communication. He will work closely with both advancement and communications teams to effectively develop and deliver messaging to alumni, donors, students, faculty and staff.

Keller shared, “[I am] going to miss the students, faculty and staff of Muhlenberg, but I know I’ll be hearing great things about the College and its community for years to come.”



PHOTO BY LEXI HALL '26

Director of the Office of Communications Bill Keller



# The “national day of hate”

BY MATTHEW BARESH  
NEWS EDITOR

Students and faculty received an email from the College on Feb. 24 with warnings of the “national day of hate.” This event was planned by white supremacists and antisemitic groups to target and harm Jewish communities on Saturday, Feb. 25. What started out as a loose threat quickly developed into a nationwide event.

“The broad-based threat has been deemed to be credible on the national level by multiple sources,” Dean of Students Allison Williams stated in the email. “The College immediately began gathering more information from our local and national intelligence and law enforcement sources.”

“It is sadly more the routine for Jewish communities and spaces across the country to field these kinds of vague threats,” shared Ira Blum ‘10, director of Hillel. “At the same time, since there was no indication of a credible threat in our area, I felt that it was necessary to resist the urge to worry, and to worry others, because doing so in my opinion was to fulfill the wishes of these hate groups.”

This extremist event had both a national and local impact. Synagogues and services across the nation enforced heightened security measures. On campus, increased surveillance was implemented via the Department of Campus Safety to protect Jewish organizations and events.

In light of the safety concerns, Campus Safety officers were put on patrol in areas such as the Leffell Center for Jewish Student Life, Congregation Keneseth Israel across the street, the AEPi and ZBT (Jewish fraternity) houses and other various Jewish organizations and events around campus. The presidents and members of these various organizations shared similar concerns for one another.

“As a leader of a Jewish organization on campus and a Jewish-identifying student, I was disturbed but not surprised by the news,” shared Derek Schulman ‘24, president of AEPi. “Unfortunately, there has been a rise in antisemitism across the



PHOTO BY PHOTO EDITOR AYDEN LEVINE '23

The Leffell Center for Jewish Student Life acts as a home for Jewish students on campus.

country. I was concerned for my organization and the safety of all our members. As Jewish students, we always feel like we have a target on our backs. The surge in antisemitism is extremely troubling and I encourage the school administration to dedicate more resources and facilitate conversations with Jewish students about these issues. Many Jewish students on campus feel upset by the lack of support from the administration and want their voices to be heard.”

“Right after hearing the news I reached out to everyone in the fraternity to ensure their safety,” said Matt DeGirolamo ‘24, president of ZBT. “Their safety was my top priority and I wanted to make sure that they felt safe during this time. Campus Safety was stationed outside of our house for the entire day which made us feel much better. We also attended the Mule Mitzvah event all together to help support each other during this time to make everyone feel calmer about the situation at hand. Seeing everyone at the event gave us a chance to support both the brothers and the Jewish community on campus as a whole.”

“I was scared because that was the first time I’ve heard of it,” explained Josh Bo-

tel ‘25, a member of ZBT. “I looked it up online and thought that it is awful that a day like this could happen in our country. Being in a Jewish fraternity made me concerned about the safety of my fraternity members, but I was glad that Campus Safety took the threat seriously.”

“In moments of distress, it takes a village to find strength, support and stability,” said Blum. “Dean Williams, College Chaplain Rev. Janelle Neubauer and Campus Safety, among others were so helpful in ensuring that there was help when and where we needed it. The College Chaplain attended Shabbat Dinner and checked in with students to see how they were feeling. My staff and I were fielding calls and texts all afternoon, helping to calm anxieties and direct those impacted to campus resources.”

“Unfortunately, it’s something that the Jewish community knows a lot about,” said Eitan Gitlin ‘24, president of Hillel. “Ira spoke with the administration of the school and we increased security around Hillel and around other Jewish organizational spaces. We had Campo [Campus Safety] parked outside of Hillel all throughout the weekend. We always have a check-in system that people have

to come in and we had a staff member reviewing everyone. But this day has never been this planned like it is this year.”

Mule Mitzvah was coincidentally held on the same day as the national event. The Student Government Association (SGA) planned the party to help bring the student body together. Additional security was posted outside the door to the event, with Campus Safety officers requiring participants to scan their student ID’s before entering.

Gitlin shared that “It was our second time doing Mule Mitzvah, we did it last year as well. This year we tried to focus on programming, which [was] writing cards to the Jewish Family Services and people who are in nursing homes. SGA sent out an email saying that the event was still happening as a follow up to Dean Williams’ email. We had over 160 students show up and it was a lot of fun. It was a bad coincidence being on the same day of the ‘national day of hate,’ but it ended up being a great event.”

The ‘national day of hate’ ended with no reported antisemitic incidents on campus. While there were no reports of attacks, the distress of the College’s Jewish community was felt nationwide.

“Throughout the weekend, I shared that there is a Jewish value called Pikuach Nefesh,” shared Blum. “Yes it’s hard to pronounce, but the translation is simple, ‘protecting the soul.’ It is the Jewish value that puts human life above practically everything else. In this situation, our individual and collective physical safety is most important, and I know that the College continues to be committed to ensuring our physical safety. At the same time, ‘Pikuach Nefesh’ also means our emotional safety. These moments can trigger lots of challenging feelings, and for those of us who felt them this weekend, know that you are not alone. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to your support network, including your peers and the many campus resources available, including Religious and Spiritual Life and the Counseling Center.”

## FROM CELEBRATION PAGE 1

Promise Neighborhoods of the Lehigh Valley, a nonprofit organization that helps create safe and inclusive neighborhoods to help children succeed, discussed the importance of youth sharing their voices. She articulated that “I have a dream, but this time it needs action. This dream requires you to be bold and courageous. You need to be a disruptor against any acts of racism in this country. You will need to unlearn and relearn the trauma and the history of this nation that has caused harm to our people. Because my life matters, and my voice matters too. We will need to come together and learn from one another and understand that hate is not okay. We must be willing to put ourselves in uncomfortable situations to then solve the problem. Remember, silence can also

be violence... We [youth] are the future. We cannot tolerate systems designed to break our people. It’s now or never to stand up and speak of solutions and of what we need to do to protect our future.”

The event ended with a vocal and dance performance by Jordan West ‘23. According to Riley-Casey, an important takeaway from the event is that “The struggle for equity, inclusion and belonging is ongoing. It is important to honor those that came before us, we will celebrate each other’s accomplishments.” Riley-Casey concluded that “living a life of joy is our birthright. We will dance, we will sing, write poetry, speak truth and live freely.

Bolt voiced her thoughts on Black activism as “working to eliminate racial inequalities. I think at Muhlenberg Black activism looks like not only creating safer spaces for Black students, but making

the existing spaces we do have safer for Black students. Additionally it means acknowledging the institutional problems that work against Black students and doing the work to fix them. It is important to understand that while Black people should take the lead in initiatives concerning Black people, support and solidarity is required from non-Black POC and white people. Non-Black POC can give solidarity and promote racial equality by stepping back and educating themselves on situations that they can’t or may not relate to about the black experience. They can also be a support system/ally in spaces that have proven to be unsafe or biased towards Black people.”

After the event, Nicole Alberto Agramonte ‘26 said that she felt “very much transformed by the mention of dreaming by Dr. Kucik. When you are constantly

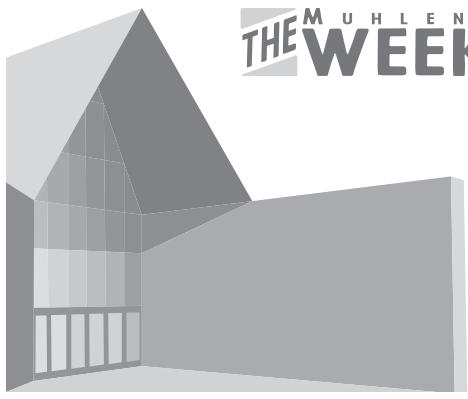
surrounded by racism and systemic oppression, you tend to forget the value of dreaming. Dreaming drives society forward, and it’s a crucial part for the progression of society. It’s important to recognize the dreams of Black people and the dreams of people of color in general. Being vocal about these dreams helps recognize the humanity of persons of color.”



PHOTO BY SHAIYAN FEISAL '26

Emanuela Kucik, Ph.D. presents the keynote speech.





"Definitions belong to the definers, not the defined."

- Toni Morrison

# The Lehigh Valley's art scene according to the artists

BY SAMANTHA TEMPKIN  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

New York City is often hailed as the art center of the world with its Broadway lights and renowned art galleries, but some of the most inclusive, community-building art may be found in less expected places.

Such a place is the Lehigh Valley, which has a presence of small-scale artistic companies that often provide more opportunities for marginalized artists than larger associations in better-known cities. The art scene in downtown Allentown provided those opportunities for Deirdre Van Walters, a performing and teaching artist. She recalls a weekly art festival called Word Wednesdays, which she attributes to her initial involvement in the Valley's art scene. Van Walters says, "Word Wednesdays was this great funky vibe that happened in downtown Allentown where there were live musicians and poets and singers, and I fit right on in there... and that led to me getting into the fold, and I feel fortunate and blessed that that fold did look like me... and it was not just a closed group, but it was really really welcoming in that respect."

Van Walters went on to describe the overall artistic environment of the Valley at the time, saying "I didn't see too many accommodating opportunities for me to fit in or to even try to audition for that role or this role. If it was casting for someone who looked like me, the character was just so conflicting from who I am that I chose not to represent in that particular role. So, that was my experience."

When there is a lack of representation in this sense, artists such as Van Walters turn to smaller-scale artistic outlets in order to express themselves. Muhlenberg invited five Black artists who have found their place in the Lehigh Valley art scene. They explained how the Valley has provided them with an environment where there were opportunities for all voices, as well as how there is room for improvement in the Valley's art scene. This included Van Walters, who took advantage of the opportunities the Lehigh Valley provided in becoming the president of a devised theater company called Basement Poetry. Van Walters was one of the five artists invited by Muhlenberg College for a conversation entitled "Traveling While Black Through the Arts," organized by Lehigh University's Zoellner Arts Center. This was part of a slate of community conversations being hosted until Mar. 31 as well as a cinematic virtual experience



PHOTO BY LILY SAFRAN '25

Left to right: Calvin Alexander Ramsey, Camille Who Armstrong, Deirdre Van Walters and Anthony Smith Jr. answering questions from the mediator.

running until Mar. 31 entitled "Traveling While Black."

Michael Freeman, an abstract artist based in Easton, Pennsylvania, is well-versed in how art can be used as an outlet for creativity and community building. As Freeman grew up with a vision impairment and a speech impediment, he used art and engagement with Black art specifically in order to express himself. Freeman's abstract work and disabilities have not always made things easy for him in the Lehigh Valley, yet he reflects on how the presence and support of other Black artists in the community gave him confidence to pursue his passion. Freeman says, "Having seen other Black artists that I've been getting to know like Anthony Smith kind of embrace me in making very abstract artwork, I'm just here to embrace it and help others that look like me to do whatever they want to do, no matter what your disability is in life."

As the artists discussed how they initially got involved with the arts, author and playwright Calvin Alexander Ramsey reflected on how the uncertainty of tomorrow that came with 9/11 motivated him to pursue his dream. Ramsey said, "I was flying out of Logan Airport, two days before the hijack, and after that, it just made me realize that if I want to do something with my writing, I really can't keep putting it off. So, after that incident,

that major tragedy, I just jumped into it. My children were pretty much almost grown, and so I started working on plays, and I'm very fortunate that I got my play produced... If you have a dream, just jump out there and do it. It's going to haunt you until you do something with it."

Getting involved in the Lehigh Valley arts scene is all about networking according to Camille Armstrong, who—after performing in "Stomp" on Broadway—moved to the Lehigh Valley for her children to get a better education. Being the only artist among six first generation Jamaican-American siblings, Armstrong was determined to forge her own way and found that connecting to various people led to success. She says, "I think most of my experiences and most of my 'ins' in the art scene was getting to know people at the wrestling practice, at the cheerleading practice for my daughter or my son... and so it started just with one relationship, and then it grew into another."

Although initially presenting this idea in a positive light, Armstrong later commented on its drawbacks with the comment, "There's no limit to art, really, but the Lehigh Valley tends to limit themselves to the possibilities... you really think that you're coming into a rich, artistic community until you try to get in, and if you don't know someone's grandmother or you just don't know a person who's

the director of a Touchstone Theater then you're just not getting in, and so how are we celebrating the art?"

"Yeah, I call it 'the art mafia.' There's like three people that control the entire visual arts scene in the entire Valley—it's kind of crazy," responded Anthony Smith Jr. Smith is a visual and mixed-media artist, a professor of art at Northampton College and an artist in residence at the Banana Factory Art and Education Center.

While the Valley provides a fertile ground for a thriving art scene, not everyone views the area in this way. Smith noted that "we're seen mostly as a community where artists are looking for cheap real estate to escape New York and Philly prices... I don't think the locals necessarily see this space as a place where they can derive world class art, especially in the visual arts world."

This leads to questions regarding the responsibilities of art consumers and how they can best support artists in the Lehigh Valley. Freeman sums up what all the artists responded and what applies to supporting all art with the comment, "Open your mind to something that's different. Something that is not the norm, but that is beautiful and that you can see the beauty in. You might see something that somebody else might not see."



# Information on “Love and Information”

BY SHINAM HUSSAIN  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

On Feb. 23, the Muhlenberg Theatre and Dance Associations held the opening night of their rendition of Caryl Churchill’s “Love and Information.” The show consisted of 78 scenes depicting conversations, arguments and interactions between characters. The play is composed of a hundred characters, and they were portrayed by an ensemble of eighteen talented students. “Love and Information” elicits thought from the audience regarding how missing information or new information can transform our relationships. Communication is portrayed in many ways throughout the play, which is meant to be representative of the different ways people can interact with one another and how delicate relationships can be.

Audience member Robin Title ‘25 said, “‘Love and Information’ as a play feels very much like a certain side of TikTok. All of the vignettes that happen are very short and the audience is kind of thrown into the middle of each story. None of the stories have a real narrative connection except for the fact that they are all about either love or information. Churchill gives a lot of room for devised work in many of her plays, and this one catered very nicely to the times we live in now, and was curated to foster a sense of relatability for a Muhlenberg audience.”

Throughout the play, the audience watched remnants and pieces of different interactions between the characters. All these interactions, true to the play’s purpose, left the audience wanting more information.

Audience member Anna Hanley ‘25 stated, “I thought it was really cool how the audience was just thrown into a scene without having any real idea what was happening between the two characters. We were just given small glimpses into the lives of the characters, which made it feel less like a play and more like witnessing a real life interaction.”



PHOTO BY MARCO CALDERON

Olivia Fornasieri ‘24 throws a tantrum on stage with Ariel Noble ‘23: “Waaaaa I don’t want say sorry!”

The show included comedy and energy that had the audience in fits of laughter and applause throughout. There was a memorable dance number in the show, where all the cast members danced to “I Don’t Feel Like Dancin’” by the Scissor Sisters.

Title said “My favorite part of the show had to be the part where the entire cast was just dancing. Not only was it just such a fun part of the show, but to also just have a dance break like that in the middle of a play goes against what is considered ‘normative’ of a western theatre play.”

Dylan Sheppard ‘25, who worked on costuming behind the scenes, offered a perspective on the play that the audience was not aware of. “My favorite part of the show was definitely the dance scene. I’ve been dancing along backstage all of tech week. Everyone working on the wardrobe and crew slowly began joining in more and more as the nights went on. It’s a se-

cret little sweet moment we all share.”

The play is meant to be open-ended to the audience. Each scene, each interaction, is meant to be absorbed by audience members and then invoke a sense of curiosity. Churchill provides a lot of room for interpretation to both the cast that takes on the show, as well as the audience that watches it. “Love and Information” is intentional in the short and vague nature of the scenes, it is meant to be reflective of reality.

Jules Curtis ‘25 gave their insight as a cast member on the show, “I hope the audience doesn’t look for an underlying, deep meaning in the show, because there really isn’t one! To me, what’s most important to take away is the experience of the show itself. It’s very reflective of how life feels—quick paced, short and in the moment. I hope the audience lives each moment of the show and looks back thinking it was a whirlwind of a good time.”

Cast member Jordan Lavalle ‘25 said, “My favorite part of the show is the distinct dialogues between the complexity and simplicity of the different pieces. It’s a show of stories. Some of which take significant thought, while others are straight to the point. Similarly, the show takes you on an emotional rollercoaster. One moment you’re watching someone have a panic attack, next you’re laughing at a child in a dinosaur costume. You don’t really know what to expect, and that’s the beauty of it.”

Lavalle continued, “The coolest thing about this show is how unique it is to each cast who performs it. Caryl Churchill, the playwright, only provides her audience with fairly short and vague dialogue. It was up to us to brainstorm and create the characters, the given circumstances, the relationships, everything. We unlocked the various stories that Churchill wrote between the lines and made it our own. The play could have been interpreted in countless ways. Our final version was based on what we, the cast, alongside our director and crew, felt was right in our minds, bodies and hearts.”

“Love and Information” is a thought-provoking play that allows the audience to interpret the stories of each character in their own way. What is so unique about the play is that it can be different for each cast that performs it, staying true to Churchill’s desire for the play to be left up to a subjective and individual interpretation on love and our relationships.

Lavalle expressed, “I hope the audience takes away an understanding of the different lives of each character, how it can portray the reality we live in. The play discusses the different ways we show love, the various ways we receive information and the means in which we communicate with one another. We see this not only through verbal dialogue, but also through sign language, dance, Morse code, painting, song, instrument and silence. Most emotions and experiences of life are represented, I hope the audience was able to reflect and resonate with at least one scene.”

## Anna Bobok’s senior recital echoes love of performance

BY ALEX CABAN-ECHEVARRIA  
STAFF WRITER

On Saturday, Feb. 25 family and friends of Anna Bobok ‘23 gathered in Egner Chapel to hear her perform in her senior recital. In a long blue gown, Bobok reentered before each section of her piece which was separated into different music genres and types of love. Seniors majoring in music with a concentration in performance must schedule their performances by Nov. 1 of their fall semester and design their program a month prior, with a choice between the Recital Hall and Egner Chapel. As a mezzo-soprano, Bobok’s music choices reflect

her work throughout the past four years in the music department.

“Senior recitals are typically billed as a culmination of four years of work, and this was certainly that and more,” Bobok says. The recital began with “Love of Love” where she performed three songs from “Le Nozze di Figaro,” a comic opera by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Regarding her song choices, she says she “pulled songs from my freshman year, my opera character study over quarantine, and even those I worked on before I came to Muhlenberg, then I rounded out the program with a few completely new pieces I learned last fall.”

Bobok designed the program herself,

which included classical songs by Johannes Brahms for “Romantic Love” and the song cycle “A Charm of Lullabies, Op. 41” by Benjamin Britten for “Familial Love.” Elaina Ragusa ‘23 says that one of her favorite songs was “The Nurse’s Song,” No. 5, and that “the piece was practically written for her, I loved the moments of stillness and the dynamic shifts involved.”

The following section after intermission was “Hatred of Love” where Bobok details her love of musical theatre in the program notes: “While all these songs show disdain for love, they helped me learn to love music and performance and brought me to this stage.” “I Resolve”

from “She Loves Me” was a song that showed this appreciation and was “one of the first character studies I did with Trisha [Budlong], and I always loved how her strength and silliness combine.”

Budlong, an adjunct professor of voice, says that the greatest gift of being an applied lesson teacher is “to work with someone for up to eight semesters and see their growth throughout their collegiate experience.” Looking back on Bobok’s growth, “Anna, in particular, has always looked to improve her artistry and her vocal technique simultaneously and we have designed her lessons and reper-

SEE **RECITAL** PAGE 7



# Artist Spotlight: Serena Hertzog '23

BY DANNY MILKIS  
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

Across Muhlenberg's campus, students are taking initiative to spread awareness about climate and sustainability issues, and to make our community's headspace as green as possible. Serena Hertzog '23 is a member of the Rita and Joseph Scheller (RJ) Fellows program, an honors community bringing together high-achieving and imaginative students who have demonstrated an exceptional intellectual and personal curiosity, and is taking on a project through the program's senior Capstone experience that aims to inspire meaningful, environmental and social change for years to come.

Hertzog is an environmental science major whose passions lie primarily in environmental justice and the creation of a

livable and equitable future. She believes in the power of education as an agent for social change, and as such, has taken on a project through the RJ Fellows program to build a sculpture of a tree on campus out of plastic bottle caps.

"My plan is to collect bottles at Muhlenberg College and at elementary schools in the community," explained Hertzog. "I guess my thinking behind that is that our world is filled with plastic. And in order to create a beautiful future we have to think about reusing things, refusing things and re-envisioning the use of things. Also, of course, trees are critical to our environment."

Education is a foundational part of Hertzog's work and motivation for the project as well as her overall philosophy on sustainable living, and, as such, her hope is to include elementary school stu-

PHOTO COURTESY OF SERENA HERTZOG '24



Serena Hertzog, a board member of enACT.

dents from the area in the creation of the sculpture.

"The idea is that I would work together with kids to create this sculpture, and then the leaves would have the hopes and visions and dreams of the community and you've written on them for the future, and the future that we want to build together," said Hertzog.

Hertzog sees trees as a representation of renewal, and as the natural manifestation of a safe haven, and in the spirit of those values, Hertzog is in the process of finding and securing a location on campus so that the sculpture can exist as a more permanent fixture within the community. She has considered a number of locations for the piece, including Fahy Commons, the exterior and interior of the Tree House (Muhlenberg's sustainability studies interest house) and areas within the

New Science Building, and is still deciding where the ideal position for the sculpture would be.

The project is still in early stages of development, but the campus can expect to see more updates in the coming months.

"I personally experience a lot of fear and uncertainty about our future, and even right now, we just got a snowfall and it's beautiful," explained Hertzog. "But also, this is our first snowfall [of the year], and that's sort of a scary thing. So something I try to do is find beauty in everyday life and appreciate nature, and I hope that this [tree] will be an object of beauty that helps us to reflect on what is important and why we care so much about protecting our planet."

PHOTO COURTESY OF DANNY MILKIS '23



Anna Bobok '23 and Danny Milkis '23 perform "I Run to You" by Lady A.

## FROM RECITAL PAGE 6

toire to support that," Budlong adds.

Bobok echoes this preparation in her lessons and how much they ran through the entire performance and through trouble spots: "Outside of my lessons I would also run through trouble spots to work them out of my system and sometimes even run through the whole program; as Trisha liked to say, I just needed to make every possible mistake so I didn't make them on my actual recital."

Bobok was also accompanied by Cat Duncan '23 and Anna Holmwood '24 for the song "You Could Drive a Person Crazy" from "Company." Bobok explains, "They all really were up to the challenge and were so kind to help me out, and I couldn't be more thankful... One of the biggest obstacles was convincing them how good they sounded and how well they were doing and have always done, so I hope after the recital and all the compliments they rightfully received, they start to believe it."

Duncan shared, "I started practicing the piece on my own during winter break, and then when we got back to campus, the Annas [Holmwood and Bobok] and I started practicing together once weekly. We also practiced with Anna's vocal instructor and the pianist, and had one final dress rehearsal before the final recital." She added, "It was such a jazzy and fun piece to select!"

After "Hatred of Love," Bobok took a microphone out to sing three pop/commercial songs, "Enchanted" by Taylor Swift, "You Can't Hurry Love" by The Su-

premes, and "I Run to You" by Lady A, a duet with Danny Milkis '23 for "Longing for Love." Milkis says, "Anna and I both love to sing, and we've been talking about what we love to sing for over a year, and would sing karaoke together on long car trips." Although Bobok chose the song, "to actually perform a song that meant so much to her in a venue like the chapel was a moment I know I'll never forget," Milkis adds.

Ragusa was in the audience, and said this duet "brought me to tears. You could tell that both of them were put at ease by simply looking into each other's eyes—not to mention the song being beautifully sung."

Milkis continues, "I was so honored to have been able to learn the ins and outs of this style of music and to feel the beautiful emotions ingrained in this melody... Anna's recital was a huge influence in helping me to get in the headspace I'm hoping to embrace for my own project next month."

Bobok's last theme of love, "Self Love," closed the recital with three contemporary musical theatre songs, ending with "Man or Muppet" from "The Muppets" (2011) with choreography from Budlong and a duet with Sarah Barainyak, which received a standing ovation from her audience. About her song choices, Bobok says, "I was so inspired by how different love looked in each set and decided to explore the many forms love could take in choosing the rest of my pieces, which made the process a lot easier and more fun."

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# Sunshine and gunshots

The scary link between warm weather and gun violence in metropolitan areas

By JAMES WYNNE  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On Feb. 9, seniors gathered in the Event Space to celebrate (or mourn, depending on your post-grad plans) 100 days until Muhlenberg’s 175th commencement ceremony. Students were greeted with bracelet-sanctioned White Claws, blaring 2000’s music and catered chips and dip. The stage was set for the class of 2023 to have a cheesy but fun-filled evening. Then, at 8:47 p.m., everyone got a text message. Thinking it was their crush confessing their love and making Valentine’s Day plans for next week, students eagerly checked their phones and read “Shelter in Place - Shots Fired Near Campus.”

Naturally, this was deeply disturbing and frightening to many students, caused significant emotional distress and was an ultimate vibe-kill; especially considering that the good feelings were riding high that day due to abnormally nice weather. In Allentown, the temperature had peaked at around 60 degrees—the highest it had been up until this point in the semester—which, paired with sunshine, made for many impromptu frisbee games and a crowded Parent’s Plaza.

Recent research done by the Boston University School of Public Health and the University of Washington School of Social Work has uncovered a concerning link between warm weather and an increase in gun violence. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association last year concluded that when the temperature rises, so does the likelihood of gun-related incidents. This comprehensive study reveals that nearly sev-

en percent of shootings are correlated with above-average daily temperatures, even after adjusting for seasonal patterns. The research team examined the temperatures and over 116,000 shootings that occurred between 2015 and 2020 in the top 100 U.S. cities with the most assault-related shootings. They took into account seasonal changes and differences in climate across regions and discovered that 7,973 shootings could be correlated with temperatures that were higher than average. The findings indicate that the Northeast and Midwest regions experience the biggest increases in gun violence on hotter-than-normal days due to more significant variations in temperature, even during the same season, or because the cities in those regions are less accustomed to hot weather. These regions are also more racially segregated than other areas of the country. The study’s findings should be interpreted within the context of structural racism and racial inequities in exposure to gun violence and heat as well as compounding effects of climate change on average temperatures. In an interview with the BU School of Public Health, lead researcher Dr. Jay Lyons acknowledged that this issue is “part racial justice, part climate change mitigation and part gun violence prevention.”

In a country where over three-quarters of people drive a car to work and it’s easier to legally buy a gun than it is to legally become a citizen, it’s evident that there are a number of societal and political issues that are manifesting into both concerns of rapid anthropogenic climate change and the cultivation of gun violence within the U.S. The first step, irrespective of the link to increased shootings, should be building a sustainable and equitable infrastructure with strong investments in green energy, job training in sustainable sectors and more robust public transportation programs. This helps mitigate the number of days in which cities are experiencing above average temperatures. But gun violence ultimately comes down to making guns harder to buy, sell

and own. Enacting policies that incorporate mental health benchmarks for gun buyers, banning assault weapons and strengthening communities in which gun violence is most likely to occur will be much more effective in reducing these incidents.

While the link between warm weather and gun violence may be unsettling, it is important to note that there are steps individuals can take to uplift their communities to reduce gun violence. It’s important to address the root causes of gun violence, such as poverty, inequality, and mental health issues by pushing local and federal policymakers to act on gun control, tackling structural issues facing communities and sharing resources that seek to alleviate these underlying problems. By working together to address this complex issue, we can help ensure that all Americans are able to live in safe and healthy communities, regardless of the weather outside.

Sources can be found at MuhlenbergWeekly.com

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor (bergweeklyoped@gmail.com) or the Editor-in-Chief (weeklyeditor@gmail.com) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.

# Should entertainment stay strictly fiction?

The debate about social commentary in popular media

By MEGAN HANSEN  
ASSISTANT OP-ED EDITOR

The discussion of politics and controversial social issues in entertainment media is a phenomenon that is widely debated among its consumers. Television, film and other forms of media frequently incorporate context from real world phenomena—people, occurrences and ideas—within plotlines. Some use satire, which mocks said phenomena, as a driv-

ing comedic force, while others create dramatic social commentaries. These depict the harmful effects of said phenomena, causing audience members to reflect on their own beliefs and morals.

For many, entertainment is a way to escape from daily hardships. To turn on the television after a long and stressful day and be exposed to channels that are talking about depressing, negative things that are happening around us is less than ideal. People would much prefer a good laugh, or a heartwarming story that takes them out of their world and into a completely made-up one.

While I certainly acknowledge the appeal behind this argument, I think it is crucial to recognize the importance of so-

SEE **ENTERTAINMENT** PAGE 9

*Tiny horoscopes for a tiny campus*

## MICRO-ASTROLOGY

*Weekly advice and predictions*

Communicated to The Weekly staff by Victor’s Lament

By THE UNIVERSE  
ASSISTANT OP-ED EDITOR

**Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)**  
Beware of people playing Assassin, you make a great human shield.

**Pisces (February 19 – March 20)**  
You’re not living life to the fullest if you aren’t picking the mystery flavor Dum-Dums.

**Aries (March 21 – April 19)**  
You feel like the main character this week. You’re not. You’re actually the boom mic that’s accidentally visible for a second in season 1, episode 16 of “Gilmore Girls.”

**Taurus (April 20 – May 20)**  
Don’t take things personally this week—have other people take them for you. You’re the mastermind behind a petty thievery ring now. For legal reasons this is a joke.

**Gemini (May 21 – June 20)**  
This week you feel like a Roomba that’s stuck on the edge of a fluffy carpet. Maybe if you make a concerning enough noise someone will come unstick you.

**Cancer (June 21 – July 22)**  
You’re going to listen to one song on repeat all week. Make it a good one!

**Leo (July 23 – August 22)**  
Still thinking about that handsome stranger you met? Stop. It was just the lighting.

**Virgo (August 23 – September 22)**  
Did you process it, or did you just think about it really hard for two hours and then pretend it never happened?

**Libra (September 23 – October 22)**  
Make your enemy a friendship bracelet and misspell their name in beads.

**Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)**  
When was the last time you vacuumed your room? The answer is too long ago. Don’t be gross.

**Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)**  
If the vibes feel a little off this week, go get a piercing about it.

**Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)**  
Spend some time in the ML Underground while you still can.



FROM **ENTERTAINMENT** PAGE 8

cial and political commentary in popular media. Many people close themselves off from politics because of stress, disinterest and confusion. This decision, while understandable, does come with harmful consequences. Ignorance is not bliss in a democracy like the one we live in. Our words, actions and votes are liable to have a strong impact on the rights, well-being and overall lives of our fellow citizens. Uninformed decisions perpetuate a world in which the values of those who face dis-

crimination and/or oppression under current political conditions are overlooked, and where improvement is unlikely. Putting relevant commentary in entertainment media, especially in a comedic way, is akin to hiding vegetables in desert. It is an enjoyable way to facilitate discussions about existing problems that should not be ignored. “Family Guy” is a popular example of this that I have seen brought up in this context. Its animation and general crude humor are enjoyable elements which draw in a large audience. However, throughout the episodes, many

jokes pertain to subjects such as politicians, government organizations, sexual identity, gender roles in American households and more. The criticism behind these jokes sheds light on such issues, pointing out flaws that would otherwise be ignored. Still, shows like “Family Guy” should not be the primary source of education on important political and social issues. Many jokes miss the mark, and often cross the line between satirical and offensive. It is merely a way to spark curiosity as to why these things are being

criticized, rather than to fully educate. To say that this curiosity leads to further research is likely naive, but perhaps it at least creates a greater sense of willingness to learn more about political and societal issues. It is time to open our minds to social commentary in the media.



# bad habits

BY MARIA ISABEL CASTILLO  
STAFF WRITER

you been drinking  
you been thinking  
what day of the week is it?  
how long ‘til our vices can no longer keep us together?  
seasonal depression often makes less room for the bad habits to get any better  
i been drinking  
i been overthinking  
all the different ways of what could be  
was told depression comes from thinking too far back,  
but the future only gives you and me anxiety  
my belly aches, want to know what it’s like to feel full  
you blow it out quite often to make yourself feel better  
just remain in the present and remind me  
that what i’m doing is “right”  
would you be proud of me if i told you how i fall asleep at night?  
the vices, the vices  
we all have them to cope  
no point in acting like the insecurities don’t occasionally make themselves known  
just wait ‘til we get there and i’ll make sure you don’t stand alone  
the vices, oh the vices  
bring me comfort until i’m ready to face all this shit on my own.

# 3:30am

BY ANNAMARIA FERNANDEZ  
STAFF WRITER

my friend depression likes to swallow things whole.  
she is a force to be reckoned with and lets everyone know.  
my friend depression takes up so much room  
she makes even the brightest of stars question if they’re worthy  
of their shine.  
my friend depression is always the loudest in the room,  
but everyone around us  
has gotten so good  
at pretending  
they don’t hear her.  
she’s bossy  
and entitled.  
she tells me when to eat,  
when to sleep,  
when it’s okay to ask for help—and it almost never is.  
because one thing i’ve always done better than her is  
silence.  
she needs reassurance that i can’t give  
because her warm embrace is always familiar,  
but something i need to be reintroduced to  
everytime we meet.  
it’s easy to forget her.  
and not in the way that she isn’t memorable,  
not in the way that his hands were  
or her hands were  
or his hands and their cries  
and my cries were.  
not in the way where when i was little and had a bad day my mom would rub my  
face and sing you are my sunshine.  
in the way that she’s been here so many times  
before you know it  
she’ll be back.  
so it’s okay to forget.  
my friend depression used to be my safety net.  
a star i wore on my sleeve to get me through the cold  
and a bounce house where everyone has left—but you.  
she was who i fell back on.  
dependable.  
my friend depression made me cry at her beauty  
because i couldn’t understand how someone so beautiful could be so sad.  
my friend depression—  
well—  
she walked away.  
and though i know she’ll be back someday...  
i forget why i started this poem.



# A Centennial Conference run to remember

BY ELISABETH LOISELLE  
ROOKIE WRITER

On Friday, Feb. 24 the Muhlenberg men’s basketball team traveled to Baltimore, MD to take on their opponent, the Johns Hopkins Blue Jays in the Centennial Conference semi-final playoff match. After a successful, winning season, the Mules fell short to the Blue Jays in a devastating 51-85 loss. The Blue Jays were ranked seventh in Division III and suffered a 73-76 loss to Swarthmore in the championship game just two days after their victory over Muhlenberg.

Muhlenberg struggled to make any field goals in the first half of the game and gave Johns Hopkins a double-digit lead going into the second half. The Blue Jays continued to hold the Mules in the second half and the Mules eventually fell short of their overall goal. Yet, senior Tommy McGuire ‘23 still describes the season as a success despite not leaving with the win. He expressed, “Even though our goal was to finish this season with a conference championship, I would say we were still successful this year. Off the court, our team bonded and became very close. On the court, we always competed and won a lot of games against some of the best competition the country has to offer.”

The Mules’ competitive nature that McGuire describes is reflected in the game’s statistics. Giovanni Rubino ‘24 had 15 points in the game, becoming only the fourth Mule to score 500 points in a season. He ended the season with 510 points total, the third-best in program history. Graduate student Dan Gaines ‘22 scored 11 points and finished his career with 1,459 points for ninth on the program’s all-time list.

The Mules look to carry this momentum into the 2023-2024 season and are excited about their team’s future. “I am very proud of our group and look forward to watching the careers of the younger guys pan out; they have a very bright future.” added McGuire.



Tommy McGuire ‘23 takes one final drive as a Mule.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERG ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

The season was full of memories for underclassmen to fifth years. “Although we didn’t reach our ultimate goal of winning the conference and making it to the tournament, we all look at this year as a successful one and us seniors believe we

left a positive mark on the underclassmen as they move forward. Our entire team became very close this season thus creating lifelong friendships.” said first team centennial conference and captain Gaines.

The Mules ended the season with an 18-9 overall record and a 12-6 conference record.

## THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY OPINIONS&EDITORIALS

# A captain’s love letter

BY JASON IVEY  
ROOKIE WRITER

At Franklin and Marshall College this weekend the men’s track team’s goal was to be top five in the Centennial Conference. While we were a frustrating single point away from that goal, I truly believe this past weekend was a success overall for both the men’s and women’s track and field teams given the circumstances. For starters, the men’s team scored 11 more points and moved up one place compared to last year. The women’s

team scored an impressive 16 points more and moved up two places from last year’s championship.

On an individual level we had two gold medals, one silver medal, two bronzes and nine regional qualifiers. On top of that and on a more anecdotal level, I saw some inspiring performances of people leaving it all out on the field and I couldn’t even tell you the number of PRs that were established this weekend. Out of all the

SEE **CAPTAIN** PAGE 11

PHOTO OURTESY OF THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

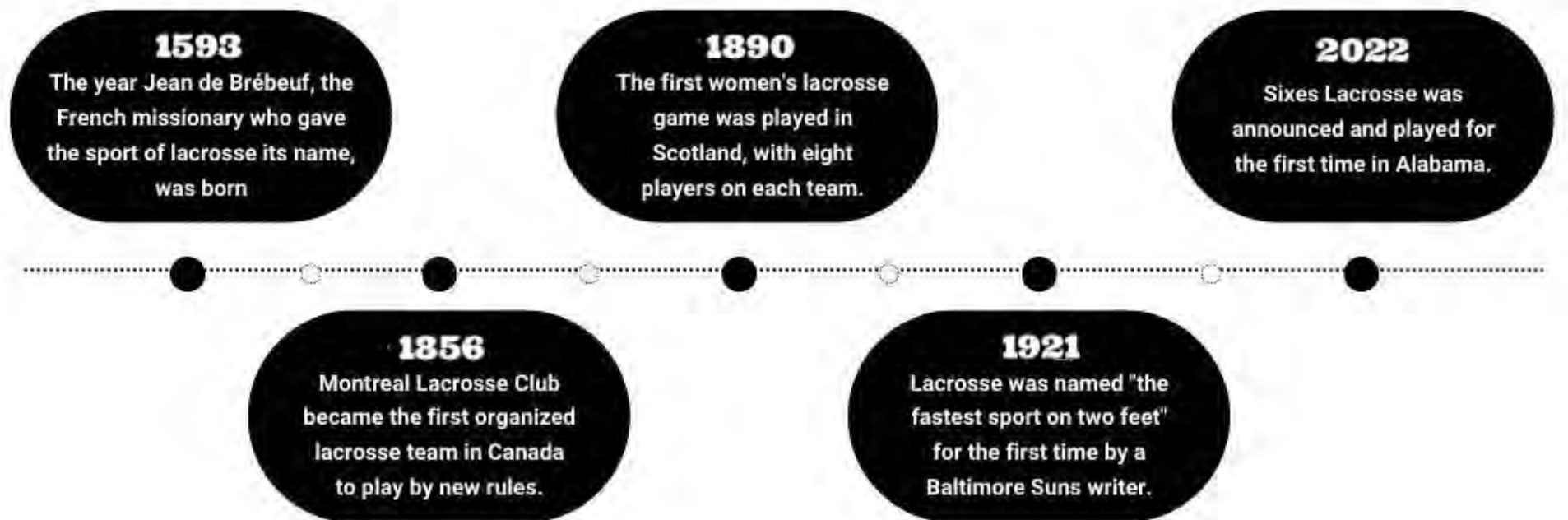


Jason Ivey ‘23 passing on the baton.



# The colonization of lacrosse throughout history

PHOTO COURTESY OF REBECCA MCCURDY '26



BY REBECCA MCCURDY  
ROOKIE WRITER

“The Creator’s Game” was a game that lasted for days and included hundreds of men from indigenous tribes. There were no player restrictions, boundaries or time limits. It was used as war preparation, entertainment and sometimes even to settle disputes between tribes. They used a wooden stick with a small, circular net on top and balls that were made out of deer skin. Some even believe the sport was a medicinal gift from the Creator.

Does this sport sound familiar?

How about its modern name, lacrosse?

The sport of lacrosse began to look more familiar to you and I during the 1800s, when the first major changes to the game were made. The actual name “lacrosse” came from French missionaries in the 1600s who first witnessed the game being played among indigenous tribes. The French thought their sticks resembled the bishop’s cross carried during religious ceremonies and Jean de Brébeuf gave it the name La Crosse, or “the cross.” As more European colonizers started to observe the game, they brought it back to Europe and started making changes to how the sport was played. In 1856, Montreal Lacrosse Club became the first or-

ganized team in Canada to play with their own rules and new style of sticks. Shortly after, Dr. William George Beers created the first official rule book of lacrosse in 1869.

At that point in time, the game of lacrosse no longer resembled the Creator’s Game. Colleges in the United States began forming teams and competing. In 1890, the first women’s lacrosse game was played in Scotland, with eight players on each team for an hour-long game and a ten minute half-time. It was not until 1926 that the first women’s lacrosse team was founded in America at The Bryn Mawr School, a private all-girls school in Baltimore, Maryland.

As time went on, more changes were made to the sport. Field boundaries were set, the goal, rather than just being a wood pole, became a triangle with a net, players started wearing pads and there were restrictions on how many players could be on the field at once and how long the games would last.

While some might believe the game of lacrosse still connects to its indigenous history, the only thing that connects today’s modern game to the game played hundreds of years ago is that it is the fast-

est sport on two feet and the goal of the game is to keep the ball in the air.

But a recent change to the sport could sever its ties to the Creator’s Game forever: Sixes. In Sixes, there are six players from each team on the field, a 30-second shot clock and four 8-minute quarters. The goalies start the play with a clear after every goal rather than a draw or face-off, which only happens at the start of each quarter, and everyone plays every position.

While World Lacrosse believes it is a modern interpretation of the indigenous game, the Haudenosaunee National men’s team was not even originally invited to play in the 2022 World Games. The International Olympic Committee (IOC), who ran the tournament, did not include the number 3 world-ranked team since the IOC did not acknowledge them as an independent nation. Ireland willingly gave up their spot in the tournament because they believed it was important that the original players of the game were represented. This is not the first time the Haudenosaunee national teams, men and women, were not allowed to travel and play in the World Games. In 2010, the United Kingdom would not accept the

teams’ Haudenosaunee passports and were told to get U.S. or Canadian passports if they wanted to participate in the games. In 2015, the same thing happened to the women’s U-19 team in Scotland, and were told to get new passports to be able to play in the 2018 games in Israel.

This new Sixes game might be played in the 2028 Summer Olympics, thereby introducing sixes to viewers who never knew the original version of the sport. While the history of lacrosse continues to be recognized through social media and Premiere Lacrosse League, a professional lacrosse league that players on the Haudenosaunee national team compete in, the game itself has changed and moved away from its origins. But as these major changes are made, people who don’t know a lot about the game will never know the indigenous values of the game of lacrosse and if the IOC does not acknowledge the Haudenosaunee as an independent nation, will the creators of the game even be able to represent themselves in the biggest international competition?

## FROM CAPTAIN PAGE 10

points we could have realistically scored this weekend we scored nearly all of them and had a near perfect day on Saturday.

Sunday was a successful day as well although not quite as much as the day prior. It’s hard to say for sure but being at a meet all day and competing with 100% of your effort probably drained the team a little so keeping the previous level of

intensity and emotion was difficult. Another aspect that contributed to the results of this weekend that I think has to be mentioned is our team’s size. To put it into perspective, our roster this year is 55 athletes, which is both the men’s and women’s team combined. Johns Hopkins University’s men’s team alone is 52. Ursinus’ men’s team has even more at 55. They also went first and second in the meet with 192.5 and 178 points respec-

tively. The next place up? McDaniel’s men’s team consisting of only 30 athletes had 96.5 points, while Hopkins had 288 points (67 points from the women’s team) with the second place team Dickinson having 102 points (35 points from the women’s team). Not having the depth in each event limits competition and puts us at an obvious disadvantage compared to these other teams. Now the coaches are aware of this issue and have even invested

in recruiting improvements, but until the recruiting numbers rise in an appreciable way, the probability for huge success is limited.



# National athletic trainer appreciation day

PHOTO BY DANNY LOGUE '26



BY OLIVIA OBERMAN  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

The Brueckner Family Wing of The Muhlenberg Life Sports Center.

Mar. 1 is National Athletic Trainer Appreciation Day and the entire Muhlenberg athletics family appreciates our athletic training staff and student trainees immensely. Without their commitment to the physical and mental health of our athletes, our several athletic successes would be much more difficult to obtain.

In the spirit of this important holiday, a few student athletes have taken the time to show their appreciation for each of our individual trainers and how each of them have positively impacted our student-athletes throughout their undergraduate careers thus far.

Linebacker on the football team, Tim Higgins '23, shows his appreciation for athletic trainer and alumni of the volleyball team Morgan Duggan '14. She has

been dedicated to Muhlenberg athletics and to Higgins' own injury rehabilitation processes. "I've dealt with a couple different injuries while playing, and Morgan has always done her absolute best in getting me back on the field healthier than before. With that, she's always made sure that my mental state was good when I've suffered an injury, which always makes me feel better about returning to play healthy and worry free."

Defender on the women's soccer team Alysa Akins '24 gives insight to her developed relationship with Assistant Athletic Trainer Chelsea Bortz and her appreciation for her, "Since having been diagnosed with a rare injury my sophomore year, Chelsea has made it a priority to check in on me not only as an athlete but also [as] a person. Having underwent two surgeries and missing my junior year season,

Chelsea has never let up her unwavering support even through the frustrating obstacles my case has presented. I do and will always appreciate the positive impact she has had on me and the support which all of the athletic trainers and training students provide us everyday."

Offensive lineman Zachary Greenberg '24 speaks of assistant athletic trainer Jamie Scalise, "Experiencing injuries is never easy on the athlete or on the trainers. Recently having a season-ending injury, Jamie has been there every step of the way with me, starting on the field, initially getting hurt, all the way through being cleared and working to get back on the field. Having a trainer, like Jamie, who cares for our best interests and health, is a trait that shows what kind of person and trainer he is. He goes above his position as an [Assistant Trainer] while motivat-

ing us to be our bests on and off the field."

Defender on the men's soccer team Evan Shlotterbeck '25, speaks to his experiences working with Assistant Athletic Trainer Sean Morse, "I've been working with Sean closely for about 15 months now through my recovery from hip surgery and some other setbacks. He has always given me individualized attention on days where the training room is very busy, and has always tried everything in his power to help me become a healthier, stronger athlete. He has pushed me to surpass my mental and physical limits with his workouts, something very powerful for an athletic trainer, and has always been very creative with his exercises. Ultimately, Sean has been a source of compassion, commitment, and hope throughout a tough time for me as an athlete and I don't know where I would be if it weren't for him being the trainer I have worked with!"

Lastly, senior captain of the women's soccer team, Emily DeAngelo '23, thanks head athletic trainer Lindsay Porembo for her unwavering commitment to her rehabilitation processes and the Muhlenberg athletics program overall, "Throughout my college career I have had some injuries both nagging and severe that had me in the trainer's [office] very frequently, and Lindsey along with the other trainers treated and cared for me with every effort to keep me playing on the field all four years. No matter the time or day Lindsey's door is always open for not only injury talk but as a support system, shoulder to cry on, a good laugh, or to give great advice. She also gives the best hugs. Because of trainers like Lindsey I still find time in my week to go say hi and check in even though I do not need treatment. I will miss Lindsey and the rest of the crew very much! Our athletic training team is responsible for so many of our successes on and off the field."

Happy Athletic Trainers Appreciation Day!

Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Mar. 2 - Mar. 8

**Women's Tennis**



Sat, Mar. 4 @ 11:00 a.m.  
Deitrich Field House

**Baseball**



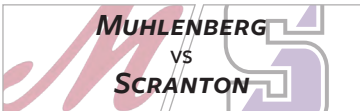
Sat, Mar. 4 @ 12:30 p.m.  
Cedarcreek Field

**Women's Lacrosse**



Sat, Mar. 4 @ 1:00 p.m.  
Scotty Wood Stadium

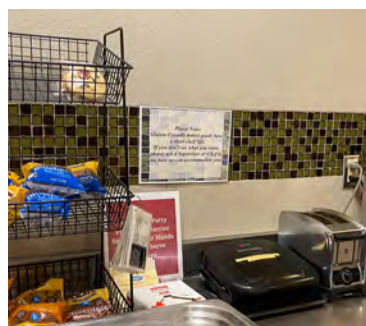
**Men's Lacrosse**



Wed, Mar. 8 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Scotty Wood Stadium



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### NEWS

New dining options coming fall 2023.  
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### ARTS & CULTURE

Muhlenberg Theatre Association's Studios productions debut.  
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### OP/ED

Or-El Ankori '25 discusses her experience as a member of Muhlenberg EMS.  
**read more on page 9**



### SPORTS

Softball seeks to repeat championship run.  
**read more on page 10**

# Incarceration from the inside out

PHOTO BY CYDNEY WILSON '23

BY MATTHEW BARESH  
NEWS EDITOR

With aims to facilitate social change, the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program was implemented at the College in 2014. Inside refers to incarcerated students while outside refers to college—in this case, Muhlenberg—students. This program's goal is to promote education through dialogue between higher education students and incarcerated students. The dialogue allows for the transformation of communities to be more inclusive and representative of all voices.

The mission statement explains that "Education in which we are able to encounter each other, especially across profound social barriers, is transformative and allows problems to be approached in new and different ways."

The program dates back to 1997, beginning at Temple University, and has since been implemented on an international level. Hundreds of faculty have taken part in the initiative, including Kate Richmond, Ph.D., director of women & gender studies and associate professor of psychology at the College. Richmond attended training nearly ten years ago for the Inside-Out program and ultimately brought the opportunity to campus.

"It took three years from when I was training to when we were able to even advertise for the classes. It took a long time," Richmond said. "There are so many logistics, you're bringing

undergraduate students into a maximum security prison. But that first class exceeded anything that I ever anticipated. That class bonded so strongly and what we were learning was incredible. What we were doing was more powerful than anything I've ever seen in a classroom at Muhlenberg because you're bringing together two different modes of knowledge, the lived experience with the textbook."

"The most impactful part of the class has been hearing the personal stories of the inside students," shared Courtney Sheckler '24, a current student in the course. "It is so easy to distance yourself from what happens in the justice system when you aren't constantly surrounded by it, so hearing their experiences really put[s] everything into perspective. It is easy to put yourself in their shoes when you spend so much time together. By listening to their stories, we get to see what they believe will be the most beneficial. We get an inside view on how the system treats people, and I believe that listening to the voices of the people who are incarcerated is the best way to find out what they need."

"People say that we need to put a higher focus on [the] mental health issue," shared Murray, an inside student. "They've been saying that for a long time. But no one's doing anything. Not a damn thing."

Richmond works alongside Jess Denke, social sciences librarian at Trexler Library, in

ensuring the availability of the course for students. "Jess and I wrote a grant this past summer for \$250,000, which we got," Richmond shared. "The grant will pay for 15 more faculty [at] Muhlenberg to be trained. So then we can offer maybe two classes a semester, instead of currently what we're offering, which is once a year. The other part of that grant is to be able to provide college credit for the students who are incarcerated, which up until this point, we have not been able to do."

The course currently takes place at the Lehigh County Jail where pre-trial detainees and those with local sentences reside. Students visit the jail to cover topics such as the history of racism in prison systems, the profit and consumption of crime, the school-to-prison pipeline and the lack of mental health resources while incarcerated. The course pushes students to become engaged outside the typical classroom setting.

Richmond said, "I think the purpose of a liberal arts education is to encourage students to be engaged citizens. In order to be an informed and engaged participant in democracy, you need to know what our neighbors are going through. The folks who are in the prison are our neighbors. So we're all interconnected, right? But if we stay siloed it's a way in which the status quo continues."

"We are breaking barriers," stated Natalie Noye '23, another current student in the course. "We are stomping on stereo-

types and bringing to light the extreme issues that are going on right down the street. It's the way that I can bring my knowledge back to campus to educate and speak on my experiences inside the jail."

"It's eye opening, the fact that not everyone realizes just because we commit a crime doesn't mean we're bad people," another inside student said.

Students at the College have shown nothing but gratitude for the program. Incarcerated students have also been moved by their dialogue with some of the Muhlenberg students.

"Without this opportunity, I probably wouldn't be exposed to people like y'all," one anonymous inside student noted. "I really appreciate y'all."

Noye reflected on her time in the course and shared the range of emotions that come with visiting the prisons. "I think it's important to remember and realize what is going on inside. We ignore and avoid what is going on 10 minutes away from our campus. Our inside students are humans too, and I have never laughed, smiled and felt so much emotion in a college course than I have in this one."

"Respect your freedom," Ray, an inside student, noted.

"My body is incarcerated, but my mind isn't," shared another inside student.

One inside student shared something he would want Muhlenberg students to know: "I am you in a different life."

Additional reporting by Cydney Wilson '23



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

2/26/23

Odor Investigation—Report of odor of Marijuana in Taylor Hall. The area was checked and nothing could be noted  
Unsecure area—Report of door found open on Chew and 22nd street, area checked, door secured

2/27/23

Found Property—Report of found debit card in Prosser Hall, owner later claimed item

2/28/23

Hit and Run—Report of hit and run to vehicle on Chew Street, note left for owner of vehicle  
Welfare Check—Report to locate student, contact made, no further incident  
Traffic—Report to jump-start vehicle at Benfer, Campus Safety officers were not able to start vehicle

3/01/23

Found Property—Report of found camera in Prosser Hall, owner later claimed item

## Word Search! Find all 20! By Ayden Levine '23

A	A	Y	J	P	Y	D	D	U	F	V	S	M	Z	L
R	R	L	I	M	S	E	S	O	V	I	H	C	U	F
W	I	T	L	K	M	P	W	O	X	C	U	E	N	H
N	B	S	S	E	D	O	G	Y	I	T	M	M	C	Q
L	M	W	T	A	P	T	F	F	F	O	W	S	Y	E
M	Q	T	O	R	N	A	Q	S	S	R	B	N	N	S
A	A	C	R	E	O	D	C	P	W	T	O	Y	R	S
R	N	R	D	P	B	P	C	A	E	D	Y	E	I	R
I	T	U	T	E	J	Y	S	U	N	T	G	C	D	O
Q	T	M	R	I	E	A	L	E	L	E	B	H	U	O
S	W	G	M	A	V	Y	D	K	E	T	A	W	Y	D
A	F	F	I	N	I	T	Y	S	E	L	U	M	L	D
T	H	E	A	T	E	R	D	M	L	E	Q	R	K	E
D	C	E	F	I	L	K	E	E	R	G	W	U	E	R
R	E	T	R	A	U	Q	S	L	A	R	E	N	E	G

Word bank: acapella, affinity, artsandculture, berg, dhall, generalsquarter, greeklife, marti, mcems, mules, news, oped, reddoors, seegers, sports, studentgov, theater, victor, weekly, wmu.

# Java Joe Coupons

Show this to a Java Joe  
Barista and receive

50% off a food item  
with purchase  
of a beverage

between 3 pm - close



Operating Hours:  
Monday - Friday:  
8:30 am - 6 pm

Show this to a Java Joe  
Barista:

Buy one beverage  
get a 2nd beverage  
half off

between 3 pm - close





# Wood Dining Commons to begin “serving up” allergen-friendly options

BY BECCA BAITEL  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

On Friday, Feb. 17, students received an email from Dean of Students Allison Williams introducing an exciting new dining hall addition: Simple Servings. Dedicated to providing allergen-friendly food options, Simple Servings will be offered in the Wood Dining Commons (WDC) beginning in the Fall 2023 semester. With plans to occupy the current WildFire Grille location, Simple Servings will be completely absent from gluten and eight of the nine most common allergens, including 90 percent of all food allergies such as milk, eggs, wheat, soy, shellfish, peanuts, tree nuts and sesame. Simple Servings will impact the current dining hall layout, with the Grille being relocated to the current Magellan's station.

“We chose this space [specifically for Simple Servings] as it is segregated from “K2,” our main production kitchen, and the other food areas. This separation allows us to store, prep and cook food for Simple Servings away from foods containing allergens, minimizing the potential for cross contact,” Executive Chef Michael Brack says. “The new station will have all brand new equipment that has never been exposed to any ingredients containing allergens [including] dedicated tools and servicewear. Separating Simple Servings from the other restaurants minimizes the risk of cross contact therefore keeping all our customers safer.”

To accommodate Simple Serving's move to the WildFire grill, other locations will undergo changes as well. Brack notes that “There will also be a refresh to the [Magellan's] service counter to accommodate the Wild Fire service. Chef's Table will also get a facelift as it will be-



PHOTO BY PHOTO EDITOR AYDEN LEVINE '23

Wood Dining Commons' current gluten-free offerings.

come the primary breakfast location. Nothing will be lost in this shuffle as we will be able to offer the same great menu mix we currently serve.”

Currently, the dining hall has a very detailed labeling system, displaying the allergens contained in food items. The College, which has been consistently renowned for best campus food in Pennsylvania and the tenth best in the nation, is committed to the safety of all students, faculty, staff and guests. Additional precautions taken by the dining hall staff will include ensuring that preparation, food storage and cooking equipment are completely allergen-free through mandatory allergen training for employees. These training sessions will include how to better address the needs of students who experience allergic reactions.

After closely monitoring the increased need for allergy-friendly options amongst the students, the WDC has taken a variety of measures, including the implementa-

tion of the allergen-free menu at Magellan's. The staff shared that they wish to continue preparing the delicious, high-quality food that the College is known for, while ensuring that the increased needs of today's customers are being met.

Many Muhlenberg students were excited by the announcement, including Gabi Klausner '24 who shared, “I am very excited about Simple Servings, I think it's going to be a great addition to the dining hall and offer students with allergies a station they can depend upon for options.”

Hannah Siskin '24 shares the same sentiments, “As someone who has recently become gluten-free, I am so excited to have more potential options on campus!”

“I do think it is great that people will have a station that they know for a fact is safe for them to eat from,” Nicole Watkinson '24 agrees.

Ayden Levine '23 stated that “I really appreciate the allergen station. It feels comforting to know that gluten free foods

are safely stored, and that the appliances are safe for me as well.” However, Levine did express some concerns saying, “As a student with Celiac disease, the food I ingest cannot come into contact with gluten at all. This includes cross contamination with utensils and dishes used to make my food. With that being said, the dining hall has done a great job with prohibiting cross contamination, but there have been many occasions where food has been labeled gluten free on the screens, and only after I double checked with a white-coat chef that it was clarified that the food is not gluten free, resulting in the TV menu being changed. I only wonder how many gluten free students before me didn't think to ask and ate the food thinking it was safe for them

Amy Swartz '26 expressed similar sentiments saying, “as someone with severe food allergies, going into the dining hall is always nerve wracking. Even though all allergens are labeled, nothing can ever be 100 percent accurate in a kitchen. I'm really excited about the new station, because it is completely allergen free and I know that I'll be able to trust it. I really hope that this new station is as allergen free as Muhlenberg claims it's going to be, because that's the only way that students with allergies are really going to feel more at ease in the dining hall.”

“Year over year we have continuously seen the percentage of our customers who are seriously affected by food allergies grow,” Brack adds. “This trend is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. Establishing a restaurant that serves high quality, innovative and delicious foods that are absent of gluten and 8 of the top 9 most common allergens was the best solution for this opportunity.”

# Psychedelics researcher gives mind-melting talk at Muhlenberg

BY JAMES WYNNE  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Every year, the sophomore class of the Shankweiler Scholars Medical Humanities program, led by Jacqueline Antonovich, Ph.D., and Gretchen Gotthard, Ph.D., invites a speaker to campus. This year, the program invited Manoj Doss, Ph.D., a renowned psychedelics researcher, to present his findings on the effects of psychedelics on the brain. His talk titled “A Critical Perspective on the Acute and Enduring Effects of Psychedelics on Brain Function and Cognition” aimed to shed light on the little-known aspects of the brain that are affected by psychedelics.

Doss is on the cutting edge of psychedelic research in the nation. He completed a Ph.D. at the University of Chicago broadly researching distortions in epi-

sodic memory with a focus on the effects of psychoactive drugs such as MDMA, THC and alcohol on emotional episodic memory. Currently a postdoctoral fellow at the Johns Hopkins Center for Psychedelic & Consciousness Research, Doss is interested in the cognitive, emotional and neural mechanisms of psychedelic drugs.

As Doss took to the stage, the audience was eagerly awaiting the insights he had to share. However, it quickly became apparent that the talk would be highly technical and complex. Doss, a veteran researcher with several publications to his name, spared no details and delved right into the details of his work.

He first began deconstructing some commonly held misconceptions about the effects of psychedelics on the human brain, even within the scientific community. It was believed that psychedelic



PHOTO BY LEXI HALL '26

The Shankweiler Scholars sponsored Manoj Doss' trip to the College.

drugs caused reductions in the area of the brain called the Default Mode Network (DMN). The DMN is active when the individual is not engaged with their external environment, so thinking about others,

thinking about themselves, remembering the past and planning for the future are all functions of the DMN.

SEE **PSYCHEDELIC** PAGE 4



# MAC student coordinators test out new events to bring to 'Berg

BY SAMANTHA TEMPKIN  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

In order to bring fun events to 'Berg, members of the Muhlenberg Activities Council (MAC) got to have a little bit of fun themselves. Four student event coordinators traveled to the National Association For Campus Activities (NACA) conference in Louisville, Kentucky.

MAC Student Coordinator Grace Sellinger '23 reflected on the highlights of the conference, saying "I got to see 3OH!3 and We The Kings. There were concerts, hypnotists, magicians, comedians, speakers... there was an electric violinist... A highlight was Aux Cord Wars, a really fun company that plays popular music and plays games with the crowd to win money." It is events like these that may help fulfill MAC's mission as Sellinger describes it: "to provide alternative activities to dangerous and harmful choices... but also to have fun. We just want to do fun things that the students would enjoy."

Along with Sellinger, MAC Student Coordinators Emma Bram '24, Hannah Katz '24 and Kayla Rivera '23 attended the NACA conference from Feb. 17 to Feb. 21, led by their advisor Jonah Adamcik '19. Adamcik is also the assistant director of Seegers Union and the student experience. There, they participated in events and conferences that could inform what Muhlenberg's future, in terms of campus events, looks like. Only four student coordinators attended the conference, but MAC gives everyone at Muhlenberg the opportunity to get involved as to develop a collaborative system of event planning.

"Our meetings are on Tuesdays at 5 p.m. in the Student Life Conference Room and I welcome all to join! My favorite part of MAC has been hearing the ideas from team members. If you have any ideas, questions or comments about MAC, I am happy to listen, collaborate and answer what I can," emphasized Katz.

The NACA offers multiple conferences throughout the year that connect collegiate activities councils like MAC with vendors, artists and event companies. The



PHOTO COURTESY OF EMMA BRAM '24

Muhlenberg Activities Council had the opportunity to go to Louisville to attend the National Association for Campus Activities.

NACA convention hall contained a multitude of vendors that supply activities to colleges, such as bouncy houses, carnival rides and stuff-a-plush. Workshops were also offered within the conference, providing insight on practices to keep in mind when planning campus events.

"I personally went to a workshop about how food on campus is super important for retention of the student body and making students feel like they want to be at school," said Sellinger, reviewing the tips she learned at this workshop regarding inclusion of food in campus events, such as providing a variety of food for different dietary and religious needs. Sellinger continued, "One of the other students that came to NACA went to a workshop about accessibility and equity with programming... saying that there will be a room where there's no lights or music going on in our flyers, or providing ear plugs if there's a stereo system. Stuff like that where it seems really simple, but

to those who would be benefited by those accommodations, those are really, really important steps for them. And so, MAC going forward is really going to try to implement those kinds of things."

"I want students to know a few things about MAC. The first being that all of our events are open to all students! I also want people to know that MAC tries hard to create events that the Muhlenberg community would enjoy," said Katz. The conference's focus on educating its attendees about inclusive and equitable practices throughout event planning provided MAC members with ideas for tangible change that could take place at Muhlenberg. Although MAC members could not reveal specific plans for performers or activities, they mentioned how NACA presented methods of combining both education and fun, especially in terms of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging.

Sellinger said, "We're thinking a lot about how to appeal to a lot of differ-

ent interests on campus. And not only interests, but identities. So, not all of our events need to be just silly and fun. Like, queer history can be fun through a bingo or trivia, but it's also really informative. Mental health [advocacy] can be fun, but also informative through some of the events the vendors put forward. We have speakers we saw that were very charismatic and very funny, but were very informative in the way they were relating to their experiences on their race, their able-bodied status, their gender or sexual identity. It was very enjoyable to watch them, but you learn a lot from them."

MAC intends to bring back some of the student body's favorite activities and performances, including tote bags (Mar. 24 at 7 p.m. in the Light Lounge), stuff-a-plush, t-shirts, inflatables, carnival games, circus performers, magicians, comedians and musicians. The activities council is also interested in focusing on events that foster diversity and inclusion, such as companies centered on mental health education and events that feature drag performers. They plan to include both well-known and local drag performers to amplify marginalized voices in the Lehigh Valley community and the work of some Muhlenberg alumni. "Myself and the other MAC team members were really excited and interested in the drag shows," said Katz. "It was especially exciting to meet Sarah Pasternak ['02], who is the event coordinator for Drag Queen Entertainment."

Although only four MAC members attended the convention, every Muhlenberg student is invited to MAC meetings and can provide input on activities that may excite and positively influence other students. Sellinger said, "It's the students on MAC, who put forward the ideas for the events that happen on campus. If you want to see more of something, or you want to see something new or you don't want to keep seeing certain things happening on campus, become involved in MAC, and you can make a change on campus."

## FROM PSYCHEDELIC PAGE 3

This gave those who believe psychedelic drugs are harmful to humans some scientific authority that affirmed their thoughts. But, Doss showed that by following the scientific process, this hypothesis was largely disproved. "Biases creep into scientific analysis of psychedelic drugs on the brain," said Doss, as he explained that, in reality, these drugs mainly affect the sensory parts of the brain.

Doss also addressed the concept of "microdosing." A practice within the community of those who use psychedelics, microdosing is where a person takes a very small amount (around .3 grams) of psychoactive drugs, typically psilocybin mushrooms, to experience an elevated state of mind to increase mood and productivity. Despite having a cult following, microdosing is "not that more effective

than a cup of coffee," according to Doss. He explained that at very low doses, psychedelics can have parallel effects to common stimulant drugs, like caffeine. The drawbacks of microdosing are also similar to those of stimulant drugs, such as feelings of anxiety, cardiac and breathing issues and a lack of long term improvements of mood and focus. So, despite what people tripping on psychedelics might claim, Doss confirmed that they do not lead to any increase in cognitive ability.

The main focus of the talk was to highlight the potential of psychedelics to improve a very specific type of memory called episodic memory. Episodic memory is a past-oriented memory system that allows re-experiencing previous events, and the data shows that forms of psychedelic drugs can greatly enhance it. Stud-

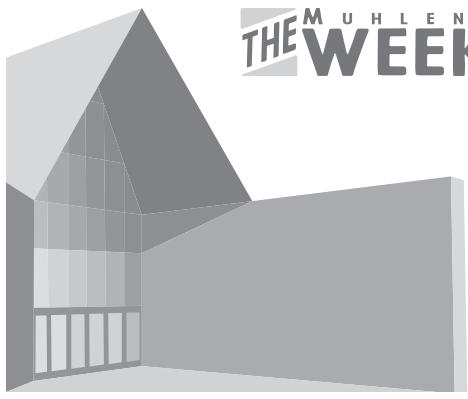
ies done by Doss and his research team produced results in which there were increases in activity in the areas of the brain responsible for episodic memory in those who had consumed LSD and even THC. Unfortunately, they won't bump up your test scores, as the memory systems used for information are very different from episodic memory. But they do not seem to cause much of a decrease either, with Doss explaining, "If you study high on cannabis the day before a test, you won't do very well on the test. If you study sober and take the test high, you might be a little slower, but there won't be much of a difference in your memory."

When asked what he wanted the average person to know about psychedelic drugs, Doss wanted to reiterate that psychedelics can play an extremely positive role in clinical settings, predicting that

"MDMA will be used as a tool to treat [post traumatic stress disorder] PTSD by 2025." He drove home that—through further research and greater understanding of these drugs—we can deconstruct our biases and use psychedelics as an essential tool in many different disciplines.

As the audience exited Miller Forum, they were left with a newfound appreciation for the complexities of the brain and the role that psychedelics can have on the brain. And while they may not have understood all of the technical language used by Doss, they were grateful for the opportunity to learn from a leading expert in the field. "Even though I couldn't follow all of the specifics, it's so clear that the speaker is very passionate and that made me feel very engaged and have some 'woah' moments" said Serena Hertzog '23.





"I really like grammar. And spelling. I was a spelling-bee kid. I'm hard-core about grammar."

- Emma Stone

## Studios: the smashing success of the semester

BY AMY SWARTZ  
STAFF WRITER

The talent and dedication of Muhlenberg students was indisputable this past weekend, with three incredible performances taking the stage. The Muhlenberg Theatre Association (MTA) put on three successful shows: "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, sad girl hours and Llorona." The Studios performances at Muhlenberg are completely student-run, with students producing, directing and acting in all three productions.

The Studios coordinator this semester, Kristin Dlugos '26, finds the charm of Studios to be in its mission for strictly student involvement. She says, "Being in an environment with students reminded me that we're all here for the same purpose. We're all students at the end of the day! It's a whole lot of passion, that's something I have found truly beautiful about this organization."

This passion that Dlugos emphasizes was bursting through all three productions, with the casts bringing so much to the stage, leaving audience members in awe of their performances. It was clear that this passion went further than just the cast, as the directors, choreographers, music directors and creative teams clearly went above and beyond for their productions and provided the behind the scenes work that allowed the shows to be successful.

Each of the shows were vastly different in content, with all of the directors seeing different visions for their shows and what messages they wanted to convey to their audiences. Brooke Hager '23, director of "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," said that "My favorite part of the process was getting to dive into the world of being a kid again! Everyone involved had to really look back and use their own sense of play and nostalgia to develop their piece of the show. We spent a lot of rehearsals remembering our own childhoods and creating the onstage moments from those memories." This deep dive back into childhood was exemplified on stage, as the colorful set design, child-like costumes and acting choices perfectly exhibited the sentimentality of childhood. Hager emphasized how she wanted to make the cast feel like kids again, saying "Fun fact: the art class drawings next to the desk were all done by the cast!"

With all of the Studios being proposed to the MTA by students, Muhlenberg students are given the opportunity to put on



PHOTO BY CARO SUTTON-SCHOTT '24

shows that resonate with them and their identities. Devyn Jarvis '23, details her experience in choosing to direct "sad girl hours." She expressed, "When I first read 'sad girl hours' I thought 'omg someone should do this play' and then I was like I should do this play. As a Queer Black student at Muhlenberg, I crave art that resonates with ALL of me and not just one single facet of my identity. College is a time of self exploration and identity building, Libby Carr encapsulated this feeling perfectly with this play. For the first time in ages I read a script and felt seen, and I wanted to have that again, I wanted to be seen." "sad girl hours" is a production that gives a voice to groups who are commonly underrepresented in theater. The identities of these characters were celebrated onstage, giving them the much needed space to be heard. Jarvis voiced "I am forever grateful for this production, the cast and crew and I hope to continue making art that expresses the ideas that I am unable to say alone."

Not only was Llorona student-acted, directed and produced, but it was also student-written. Alejandra Cepeda Bátiz '23 began writing the show in her Intro to Playwriting class sophomore year. Bátiz

and Ruhani Singh '23 co-directed the show as a Studios production, but before that it started in the New Play Reading Series, became a show in the Red Door Play Festival and then finally became a Studios production this semester. In her playwright's note, Bátiz discussed her inspiration for the show, stating "The grand legend of La Llorona (The Weeping Woman) tells the tale of a woman who went insane and drowned her kids in a river. She then haunts the streets of Mexico as she looks for them, nocturnally crying her famous words: 'Ay, mis hijos,' (Oh, my children). It is said that she's hunting for kids to replace her own." While writing in her Intro to Playwriting class, she found a different version of the fable, expressing how "This version, different from the myth I grew up with, hit me in a way I can't describe. Not only was this woman ripped away from her children but she also had her story taken away from her—villainized and silenced." This version of the fable inspired the show that took the Studios stage. Cepeda Bátiz and Singh had the hope for their audience, stating "We want to invite you to reflect, to feel, to engage, to begin to understand. We hope you begin a process of empathy, perhaps even

one of action."

Bátiz and Singh reflected, saying "I think that this experience taught us a lot about theatre and how theatre is made. With Studios being completely student-run, we think that leaves space for more communication and honesty, as a lot of the bureaucracy and hierarchies that come with faculty-led productions are set aside." Llorona tackled difficult subject matters from perspectives of students and students only, making the show completely representative of the Muhlenberg student community, truly adding another layer of authenticity to the production.

Dlugos remarked that her favorite part of Studios was: "The collaboration! Being able to work with so many different people has allowed me to learn so many new things and unlock a lot of new opportunities for me! I've seen so much hard work and dedication and it inspires me!" The MTA and all students involved in Studios work tirelessly to inspire not only one another, but the entire community that they impact with their phenomenal productions.



# Contemporary Music Festival premieres starring Matthew Russo, DMA

BY SHAIYAN FEISAL  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

On Friday Mar. 3, Muhlenberg's department of music hosted the "Contemporary Music Festival" starring the University of Connecticut's (UConn) trombonist Matthew Russo, DMA at Egner Memorial Chapel. Russo was asked to perform for this festival by his colleague and friend Andrew Ardizzioia, DMA., an assistant professor of music and the director of composition and instrumental studies at Muhlenberg.

Ardizzioia describes the trombone as "something that typically isn't known as a solo instrument. However, Russo constantly tries his best to show you all of the different things you can do with the Trombone." Russo performed "Sonata Concisa," a piece composed by Ardizzioia, along with other pieces composed by Russo's colleagues and students. In addition, Russo was invited to instruct a master class to the low brass (baritone, euphonium, trombone and tuba) Muhlenberg students via Zoom.

Russo holds a Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) from The Hartt School, which is where he met Ardizzioia. He also holds a Master of Music from the Yale School of Music. He has been a part of UConn's faculty since 2015 and teaches applied trombone lessons, brass techniques and leads

the UConn Trombone choir. He aims to bring unknown works to audiences through innovative programs and culturally relevant themes, such as the Contemporary Music Festival. According to Russo, the objective of his performance was to "celebrate the friendship that we find through music and the wonderful connection we maintained and strengthened throughout the most isolating portions of the COVID-19 pandemic. Half of the repertoire selections in this concert were born out of the situations that could only have occurred during the pandemic."

During 2020, in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, Russo started playing a Massive Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game "Final Fantasy XIV." Russo's piece, "Air Varie on 'The Measure of His Reach,'" was described as being "based on the main theme of 'Stormblood' which is a content expansion that details the events of two occupied nations achieving independence from the evil Garlean empire." Russo thought it would be fun to "write a theme and variation in the style of virtuoso trombonist Arthur Pryor who wrote similar variations on themes and folksongs when he toured with the Sousa band at the turn of the 20th century."

"Für Frankie" was inspired by Russo's son's snow globe/music box breaking. The tune in the music box was "Brother James's Ayre." Russo attempted to fix it,

but was unable to do so and ended up buying a replica of the music box that had the tune of "Für Elise." Russo tried to swap the drum in the new music box in an attempt to make it sound like "Brother James's Ayre," but this method did not work. The result of his trial and error led to the audio in "Für Frankie" which was created by Michael Denis O'Callaghan. Callaghan created a sound with the rhythm from "Brother James's Ayre" and the pitches of "Für Elise" to use as a "beautiful soundscape" that was perfect for the "sonorous trombone to play in and above."

"Sonata Concisa" is described by Ardizzioia as a "continuous movement comprised of three separate sonata forms that create an additional, overall ternary structure... The second section is slow and ethereal and was composed as an elegy for my friend and choral conductor Germán Aguilar who passed away suddenly while I was working on the sonata."

Ardizzioia edited the Sonata in 2019 and Russo wanted to perform Ardizzioia's piece. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Russo thought that he would only be able to do a virtual recording. Fortunately, Russo was invited at Muhlenberg to play the wonderful and concise sonata for a live audience.

Russo concluded the show by emphasizing the ways in which everyone is in-



PHOTO COURTESY OF LIAM SKOPAL '26.

Muhlenberg welcomed Matthew Russo, a guest trombonist played in the chapel on March 3rd.

terconnected. "All this is to show you the incredible "measure of reach" as a music community. You can find your connection to anyone in six degrees... The connections between musicians are meaningful and as a result I find that there's a little something for everyone in the works represented."

## Black History Month at Muhlenberg



GRAPHIC BY PHOTO EDITOR AYDEN LEVINE '23

BY SHINAM HUSSAIN  
ASSISTANT A&C EDITOR

Black History Month concluded at the Bend of February, and throughout the month there were a number of events held in order to celebrate it. The events held and the initiatives taken in order to commemorate the month were largely by student-run organizations. At the beginning of Black History Month, there was a student spotlight on the Light Lounge television that highlighted Black students and their achievements. Along with the spotlight, there was a timeline hung up in the Light Lounge as well, that displayed Muhlenberg's history with diversity and inclusion.

The timeline is titled "Toward Diver-

sity: Chapters in Black History at Muhlenberg." This is a part of an initiative named the Muhlenberg Memories Project (MMP) which examines Muhlenberg's early efforts into diversifying the College. The MMP website began in the spring of 2021 by two students, Hailey Petrus '23 and Samantha Brenner '21. The MMP has collected oral accounts from students, faculty and alumni while noting that it is an ongoing project. MMP is still acquiring more responses, insight and accounts from members of the Muhlenberg community, in order to highlight the many stories and experiences of students and faculty of color. The timeline by the MMP displayed in the Light Lounge is a look into Muhlenberg's history with diversity while also amplifying the experiences of Black students and faculty throughout Muhlenberg history.

Along with the timeline and the student spotlight, there were different events and gatherings hosted in order to celebrate Black History Month. Toward the beginning of the month, there was a Black love event hosted by the Men of Color Network, Queer and Trans People of Color Collective (QTPOCC) and Black Students Association (BSA). The Black love event was a conversation exclusive to Black students where they were able to

speak about Black love and how it can be expressed and highlighted on campus.

Saskia Butler '23 voiced "My favorite event celebrating was our Black love conversation. It felt great seeing so many Black students come out and talk with each other about how we can better support each other on campus."

There were events sprinkled throughout the month, such as a BSA sponsored "Paint and Sip" that was open to all students, a movie screening of "Puss in Boots: The Last Wish" at the Diane Williams Collegiate House, and a karaoke night hosted by BSA and Muhlenberg Activities Council (MAC).

The events were based around a central theme for the month, which were Black activism and Black joy. Ibrahim Sidibeh '25, Vice President of BSA said, "Black joy and Black activism was an essential theme because we need to start associating Blackness with success and joy rather than the stigmatization of struggle and trauma. The world succeeds when Black people do. We need to start redefining what it means to be Black, and the celebrations through Black History Month we held definitely began doing that."

Toward the end of the month, there was a fashion show to highlight the different styles embodied by the Black commu-

nity, along with displaying clothing pieces made by students as well. Sidibeh stated "My favorite event this month was definitely the fashion show. Watching people I have never seen come on stage and present themselves and shine like they were was so warm and encouraging. Everyone had such a good time just breaking out of their shell and embracing themselves, including me."

Butler said, "I really hope we can continue putting on the fashion show in celebration. It went so well, and it was so great to see everyone expressing themselves through clothing."

When reflecting on how Muhlenberg celebrated Black History Month, and what more can be done, and what celebrations can happen in the future, Butler expressed, "I hope that Muhlenberg can work with the music department to celebrate Black musicians and artists. I think it would be a great way to reflect on the contributions made to the music world and many students would be interested."

Sidibeh shared, "I can only encourage Muhlenberg to keep celebrating and uplifting Black students and faculty beyond February. Black success and excellence doesn't stop there, so why should we?"



# Guest speaker gives sociology a “reality” check

BY ANNA BOBOK  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On Monday, Mar. 6, Muhlenberg’s media & communication department hosted Lehigh University’s Associate Professor of Sociology Danielle J. Lindemann, Ph.D., for her lecture entitled, “True Story: What Reality TV Says About Us.” The talk was based on her book of the same name, which was published a little over a year ago and has since garnered attention from multiple media giants, including The Washington Post, NPR and Esquire.

Lindemann began by explaining why she decided to focus her sociological research on reality TV, which she felt was necessary because it had been discounted by many of her academic peers. Her work with students showed her it was a valuable resource to explain concepts from sociology and make them accessible, especially because sociology writing is filled with elevated language and paywalls.

She went on to explain what reality TV is, since many people claim they don’t watch or enjoy it, but nearly half of all TV is reality TV, and, as Lindemann said, it’s “impossible to look away.” Her definition includes television that features people “ostensibly being themselves,” rather

than characters, that is primarily meant to entertain rather than inform. This makes cooking shows and competitions reality TV, but excludes news broadcasts.

Lindemann led her audience in an activity to prove the salience of reality TV that she called the Kardashians/Supreme Court challenge. This involved everyone working by themselves or with others around them to name as many members of the Kardashian family and the Supreme Court as they could while Lindemann observed. In the end, only a group of Muhlenberg professors could name every justice.

This challenge proved that even if you don’t watch “Keeping Up With The Kardashians,” they’ve still impacted you in some way. This was even qualified by multiple studies cited by Lindemann, such as a decrease in teen pregnancies during the height of “Sixteen and Pregnant” or Donald Trump’s rise to the presidency after his time on “The Apprentice.”

Lindemann then explained that the exaggerated performances we see on reality TV can reveal to us what our society values and believes; in Lindemann’s words, “it teaches us the narratives we tell ourselves about marginalized groups.” “RuPaul’s Drag Race” and “The Bachelor,” for example, are performances of gender that



PHOTO COURTESY OF DANIELLEJLINDMANN.COM, AND MARC YUN PHOTOGRAPHY.

Danielle J. Lindemann, Lehigh’s Associate Professor of Sociology, visited Muhlenberg March 6th to give a talk about Sociology.

show us an exaggerated version of how we believe men and women should look and act in society.

Using this lens on more reality TV, we see how our ideas of class are normalized by what we watch. Looking at “Undercover Boss,” “The Kardashians,” “Here Comes Honey Boo Boo,” “Basketball Wives” and “What Not to Wear,” Lindemann explained how “reality TV takes us on a tour of the class system,” revealing how much we value the opinions of the wealthy and how much the media we

consume likes to make fun of the working class, even when they are able to overcome their circumstances.

Lindemann concluded with the question, “Am I a horrible person for watching?” Her answer is no, because it would make her a horrible person, too, and because this “trash” can help us understand our world. She implored everyone to think more critically and apply a sociological lens to everything they consume, and to not feel guilty about enjoying their favorite reality TV show.

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# “I don’t know”

By JULIA LENNON  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

An overrated societal virtue is the notion that we must know everything all of the time. You see it everywhere. You’re in elementary school—“what do you want to be when you grow up?” You’re a junior in high school—“where do you want to go to college?” “What do you want to major in?” “What do you want to do after college?” You’re in college—“what do you want to do for the rest of your life?” If and when you say “I don’t know,” no one seems satisfied. Why? Why can’t you not know?

I worked in fast food for over a year up until I went away to college, and I had this particular boss. He said to me one day, “Wanna know my best advice for college?” I said, “Sure,” and he told me, “Know what you wanna do going into college.” After he said that, I knew to disregard it and any other advice he had to offer me. As an undecided major with no clue what I wanted to do not only out of college but in it as well, this conversation was not ideal. It came out a little while later that he had some previous violations with the law and thus his employment was terminated. This is not to say that you shouldn’t listen to someone who tells you that you should know what you want to do with your life, but rather to keep an open mind and take things with a grain of salt.

In class the other day, we were reading an essay and sharing details about the writer’s prose. There was a period where

everyone seemed to quiet down and no one offered up a point at our professor’s request. I raised my hand in the silence, pointed to a detail in the piece and my professor asked, “What do you think this means?” I responded truthfully, sincerely and curiously. “I don’t know.” The words felt like fresh air. It was as if I had just confessed something and it felt wonderful. This is not to say that you should go through life or school with no ambition or desire to interpret, but rather that it’s okay when you genuinely don’t know the answer. This way you can listen with curious ears to what others may have interpreted the point as.

Furthermore, we tend to spend a lot of time worrying about the future and the past. Did I make the right decision? Will I be satisfied with this course of action? Did I act alright in that social situation earlier? Did I do well on that test? Am I going to be able to make money off of this pipe dream? Is this a waste of time? Am I going to like this new activity I joined? Are they all going to like me? Am I doing it right? But you can’t possibly know the answers to all of these questions—to all of the queries that plague your conscious mind on the daily. Instead, we worry and we overthink and we wonder what we may have done wrong. The answer may not be one that you can conjure up or find easily. Knowledge can take time and experience. Therefore, you might find that your head’s a little clearer and your mind’s a bit more at ease if you shrug your shoulders, breathe out, and say, “I don’t know.”

# MCEMS: not just a uniform

My experience with being a student EMT on campus.

By OR-EL ANKORI  
LAYOUT EDITOR

I had no plans of joining Muhlenberg College EMS when I first stepped foot on campus. Like many nervous first-years, I scoured the Muhlenberg College website for clubs and opportunities to get involved with, briefly scanning over the MCEMS entry and wistfully regretting the fact that I was just not built for it. I wasn’t certified, I was somewhat queasy—despite my slight interest in medicine—it was never something I truly considered as an opportunity that was open for myself.

Luckily, I decided to push myself outside of my comfort zone; after heavy encouragement from a friend, I started out on the MCEMS journey that led me here, to this article, today. I interviewed (I still remember the weird smell of the 22nd street apartment basement), I got accepted (omg!), I spent over \$100 for fancy pants and really heavy boots (like I need to

be taller than I already am), went through my first Basic Life Support CPR class (for which I had to carve out four hours of my classic overcommitted Muhlenberg life), had my first shift (as per Murphy’s law, I was woken up at 2:30 AM), and was called for my first college drunk person (not my last, but not as common as people think).

Over the summer of 2022 I took my EMT course (required within the first year of joining) and got to learn a lot more about A&P (anatomy and physiology), meds (medications), ABC’s (airway, breathing, circulation) and so many other acronyms and shortcuts that it almost felt like I was learning a new language. The instructors threw us head-first into medical and trauma scenarios with mannequins that seemed so real and yet malfunctioned every other day. My favorite experience was helping to deliver a pregnant mannequin with two of my classmates, covered in fake blood and lube, with the instructor yelling at us as the patient from another room.

Most of all, I learned about patient care, communication and expectations. I realized that when we arrive on scene most patients look to us for reassurance and for level-headedness, a degree of trust I will never disrespect. My most valuable EMT experiences have revolved around

Tiny horoscopes for a tiny campus

MICRO-ASTROLOGY

Weekly advice and predictions

Communicated to The Weekly staff by Victor’s Lament

By THE UNIVERSE  
ASSISTANT OP-ED EDITOR

Leo (July 23 – August 22)  
Does Matcha taste like grass or are you just a hater? It does taste like grass. Sometimes the haters are right.

Virgo (August 23 – September 22)  
Wanna shake it up a little? Try a new brand of peanut butter. It’ll change your entire outlook.

Libra (September 23 – October 22)  
Ignorance is bliss—except when it’s absolutely catastrophic. Maybe try for ignorant-ish?

Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)  
Life is short, stick stickers on everything.

Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)  
I know you were hoping to be the liability this week, but one of your friends is already way ahead of you. You’ll get your turn eventually.

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)  
A lie of omission may still be a lie, but at least it can’t get you charged with perjury!

Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)  
Heal your inner Horsegirl by galloping through a field, maybe even under Victor’s Lament.

Pisces (February 19 – March 20)  
Don’t bother going outside this week, it’s not worth it. Vampire era starts now.

Aries (March 21 – April 19)  
Bad people are occasionally going to be taller than you, and you just have to live with that.

Taurus (April 20 – May 20)  
Sometimes you need to be lightly misted like the lettuce in Wegmans, and that’s ok.

Gemini (May 21 – June 20)  
Be the red sock in the washing machine of life.

Cancer (June 21 – July 22)  
Don’t get the soup, it’s not gonna be what you want it to be.

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor (bergweeklyoped@gmail.com) or the Editor-in-Chief (weeklyeditor@gmail.com) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.



FROM **MCEMS** PAGE 8

times a month to respond to the medical whims of the student body (or to wake up at the crack of dawn just to schlep across campus)?

Let me give you our elevator pitch. As mentioned above, we are a (mostly) ~selfless- volunteer crew (some of us, like me, join only because we look good in the uniform) operating a quick response service unit, also known as our cute little truck Jimmy that you might notice around campus (see attached picture for emphasis).

We are composed of EMTs and future EMTs dedicated to providing quick, confidential and high quality emergency medical care to the Muhlenberg community at large.

In all seriousness, though, my process of joining MCEMS and going through the required avenues to rank up has been one of the most valuable experiences of my college career. Getting to respond to calls and treat patients instills a sense of purpose in me every time I wear the navy and navy (and a little black) uniform and has taught me so much about who I

want to be and what I want to accomplish in life. Operating alongside other EMTs means that I get to learn both through my own experiences as well as from others, who hold the place of teachers, mentors and friends in my life. Together, we collaborate to create the best organization we can to serve the greater community in whatever medical capacity it needs.



PHOTO COURTESY OF OR-EL ANKORI '25

Or-El Ankori '25 poses with "Jimmy the truck" and Crew Chief Gabe Kanter-Goodall '25.



# Tectonic Shifts

BY MUSTAFA HALL  
OP-ED EDITOR

My cells remember the feeling well

A black hole formed in the center of my sternum and

crushed all I knew

That sense of suffocating terror

Terror interlaced with grief

I longed for the beam of the moon to carry me away and hold me

I longed for something light to keep my skin in place

(gently and grotesquely falling apart)

This isn't naturally mine but was gifted to me

by the Pupils and Blood of my Black Mothers and Fathers and Peoples

It's a gift wrapped with protection

I forgot how heavy it sits in my stomach

How colorless yet

colorful the smears are

Can I carry it alone?

help me hold my tears

help me release my tears

help me breathe it all

hold the weight of my melanated flesh

I beg you cuz I can't bare to do it alone

# girlhood

BY KATHERINE CONLON  
MANAGING EDITOR

i am 13 again

beads scattered on the carpet

friendship bracelets reaffirming what i had let go

what i had distanced myself from

i am 10 again

we're at summer camp

the boy you like runs by as we split a snack

we exchange giddy looks

an exuberant laugh forces its way through my lips

blissfully unaware

i am 8 again

we're mermaids with chlorine-soaked braids

nothing is more important

we reluctantly reapply our sunscreen

these moments morph into decades

but our divine feminine friendship never ceases

i hurt, i bleed, i purge

but i see you and i am her again

watered down juice boxes and dirt-stained gymboree shorts

taylor swift singalongs and photo booth strips with crooked teeth smiles

that girl is still in me

and i see her so clearly when i'm with you



# Tomorrow we'll play to be champions again

Softball's roster might have changed, but their goal is steadfast.

BY AVI PULLIN  
ROOKIE WRITER

On Feb. 23, the Mules kicked off their season with a strong performance in a doubleheader against the Kean University Cougars.

After losing their first game, the Mules immediately found their rhythm during the first inning of the second game. After quickly loading the bases, Maddy Svenningsen '26 drove Sophia Cicchetti '24 home with a ground ball to third. Ava Calabrese '25 then took a walk after only five pitches to force Samantha Winegard '24 home, scoring the Mule's second run of the inning. Following the runs from her teammates, Justine Bergara '25 secured the win by pitching zero walks and allowing only one run. Raya Kunes '24 and Bergara helped the Mules stay competitive through game one and eventually win game two.

Coming off of their strong performance against Kean, the Mules look to the Spring Classic in Myrtle Beach to set the tone for the rest of the season. "We started off strong but there are always things to work on. No matter how well we do this season, we need to tip our hats to what we did well but we understand the importance of identifying what we can work on," said Calabrese.

Echoing Calabrese, Gillian Zack '24, an outfielder for the Mules, said, "For the most part we're keeping everything the same and we're just building off of the skills from last year."



PHOTO COURTESY OF SARA FALLON '23

Softball team selfie.

Samantha Winegard '24 added, "We're not going in thinking we win automatically but we have confidence and we will continue to try to win."

A few talented players graduated last year that were integral parts of that 2022 playoff run. This year one senior holds together the team, Sara Fallon '23 describes her hopes for the season saying, "It's been a tough four seasons with COVID, and then last year I was injured and severely sick all the time, so it feels like my first real season but it's actually my last real season, so I just want to play and have fun and work hard!" Along with Fallon the team is focused on the future. Calabrese, one of the catchers for the Mules said,

"We lost a lot of big personalities but what stuck with us the most that has prepared us for this season is that they taught us 'Berg Softball' so now we can use that and teach the new generation of players." Gill added "We have a lot of returning players who saw the field during those big games and now we have great additions. Their talents are going to help us this season."

In addition to the seniors who have graduated, the softball team has lost a few key players to injury. Jane Banahan '24, Kaitlyn Buurman '25, and Dani Roban '25 all suffered major injuries before the season that kept them from playing in the season opener. Coaching decisions to fill those roles have affected the team

but have not dampened the competitive atmosphere. Banahan stressed the importance of "being mentally ready" as well as being physically ready. She said, "we're doing things with purpose."

The team's mental fortitude will prove helpful over the next week of competition. The Mules will face Randolph-Macon in a doubleheader in Ashland, Virginia on Saturday to kick off their trip. Later, they will head to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina to start their Spring Classic. Despite the challenges they will face this season, the team is confident in their ability to overcome adversity and succeed.

Fallon says, "I can't wait to hit the dirt."

## A new team is coming to 'Berg

Change the t-shirts—it's 23 sports one team now. Welcome women's wrestling!

BY MATTHEW BAKER-GRUNZA  
SPORTS EDITOR

On Feb. 15 the Muhlenberg Athletic department's communication team announced the founding of a new Muhlenberg Sports team. The women's wrestling team will start competing in the winter of 2024.

In the past few years the Muhlenberg men's wrestling program has seen con-

siderable growth from an 8 man roster in 2010, that saw 2 dual meet wins between 2009-2016, compared to the Coach Jason Mclean '01 era (2018-Current) of 26 wins in 5 years. This decision continues to build on the already booming success of the team and seeks to serve both current and future Mules.

"An Athletics Strategic Task Force recently recommended the addition of women's wrestling based on the tremendous growth we are seeing in high school girl's wrestling. There is also a strong tradition of wrestling at Muhlenberg and in the Lehigh Valley, it makes sense for us to be a leader in the support of women's wrestling on the college level" stated Athletic Director Lynn Tubman.

The decision is an attuned decision from the athletic department as they capitalize on an experienced men's program and a growing national endorsement of

the sport. "We have already seen interest on the local and national level from girls interested in wrestling in college. Other DIII institutions in the area that recently added women's wrestling have already seen success in building their programs" observed Tubman. As more women's wrestling programs sprout up across the country, the Muhlenberg Athletic department wants to be at the forefront of this national charge. This attitude is what makes a Mule, from the fans to the athletes to the athletic administrators.

"We feel women's wrestling is a great fit and compliments our current offerings! One of our goals is to provide opportunities for students [to] participate in college athletics. Providing a positive student-athlete experience remains a key focus for all our teams. We are confident that women's wrestling will provide new opportunities for our students and be

a positive addition to the department," shared Tubman. A longtime motto of the Mules is 22 sports, one team. Tubman added, "We are now 23 sports, ONE TEAM!" One team, and for the men's wrestling team, new family members. "Wrestlers are a special group. There is a mutual respect for anyone or person that goes through the challenges, ups and downs and vigors. The Mules Wrestling family will only grow and be stronger," shares Mclean.

With their eyes on the prize the department is in the full throes of a nationwide search for a head coach, Mclean acknowledges that the most challenging part will be "the initial stages of getting started. I have full confidence in the future success of the program." Rightfully

SEE **TEAM** PAGE 11



# Gliding to glory

The Flying Squirrels show awesome potential against Colby College (#27 in the nation).

BY MATTHEW BAKER-GRUNZA  
SPORTS EDITOR

There's a special kind of cold that comes from harsh forty mile per hour winds. It seeps into your bones and infects your mind with self-doubt. These were the conditions that Muhlenberg's Ultimate Frisbee team, the Flying-Squirrels, were faced with on Feb. 4 in Vineyards, NJ. The Squirrel's started their two-day tournament against the formidable University of Vermont.

A typical Ultimate Frisbee tournament consists of 3 pool-play games each lasting 90 minutes. On the field, each team lines up with seven players with a start similar to a football kickoff, except in frisbee, your quarterback picks up the disc and isn't allowed to run with it. Teams will then go back and forth sending deep throws to their receivers (who are named cutters) until they near the endzone, where they will attempt to make a short throw for a point. In these 90 minutes when the first team reaches seven it is half time and the first team to reach 15 points wins. In competitive matches, rarely do teams reach the required 15 points so the team with the highest score at the end of 90 minutes wins.

The first match against Vermont was a daunting matchup. The Squirrels height could not compare to their opponents and Vermont had already played in their first game. Vermont quickly scored the first points while the squirrels got their patagia under them. They failed to pull back the quick lead that Vermont had asserted early on, but we're quickly adapting to the zone defense that would be necessary for the rest of the day.

A zone defense in ultimate frisbee takes on many forms but the most popular used by the squirrels and their opponents is named the three-man cup. The three-man cup is a defensive formation that the Squirrels have been trying to instill in their rookies since the fall season. The cup is a defensive play that forces the quarterback (the handler) to make risky decisions by blocking passing lanes and forcing the handler to throw the disc into the wind. Vermont was extremely capable at breaking the cup and capitalizing on the opportunities of open cutters.

Against Lehigh University and West



Sam Gartenberg '23 and Yoav Susskind '25 playing in Scotty Wood Stadium.

Chester University "We played great games, the team is looking good in the future," said captain Joe Pizzolato '24. In these two games the team walked away with two commanding wins beating both teams by more than 5 points. Two essential players were TJ Lillis '25, who scored the majority of the teams points and made seemingly impossible catches to maintain possession throughout the game, and rookie Esch Sage '26, who played the two position in the cup while demonstrating an exemplary understanding of the game by trapping his opponents on the sidelines and converting on offense.

The next day the team faced the challenge of fatigue that comes from a full day of competition, for some a Saturday night out and a 5 AM wake up call before a two-hour drive. The Squirrels first opponent was nationally ranked Colby College (#27). The Squirrels started off receiving the pull (the kickoff) first, and quickly got the first point. Then the Squirrels converted another defensive possession

into points. The two teams went back and forth like this with the wind at last calm until Colby started to pull away at half (7-5). Sadly, the Squirrels came out of half with a laxidasical person defense that failed to force Colby one way or another. As you stood on the sidelines you could hear Colby walk-off with heightened confidence from this disorganized defense. The writing was on the wall and both teams knew it. Colby walked off the field with a dominating box score 15-5.

Now relegated to the losers bracket, the Squirrels would go on to play an injury-ridden Lehigh team. A team that the Squirrels were happy to play again, due to the bond that had developed during the previous day. Both teams grew accustomed to crossing the field and chatting with the opposing team. "We kept making a bit over which bars in Bethlehem could be ours" said Sam Gartenberg '23. This off-field comradery carried onto the field with players exchanging playful jests throughout the match, and even though

the Squirrels won 11-6, the two teams gathered arm in arm in a circle at the end of the game. "Frisbee is a competitive but charming sport with people that want to play their hearts out but also just want to throw around a disc. Even when tensions are high you find a way to love the other team. That moment after the game where we all just sat together and chanted piso mojado, caution cuidado around a wet floor sign is a perfect example of that" said star handler Gabe Duftler '25.

In the penultimate game for fifth place the squirrels had an incredible comeback against DI Penn State University, only to fall short in a final 25 minute point with no subs. Avi Pullin '25 said, "We frequently play down to a level where we make really simple mistakes, and we often give up points when we shouldn't, but at this tournament, especially in the later games, we slowed the game down and made better decisions, then we had in the past, and I think that's what led to our success as a team."

FROM **TEAM** PAGE 10

so, whoever the next coach is will be greeted with a recruitment process that is already in progress.

"We have already started to recruit in PA, NJ, NY and in New England states. We will also recruit internationally," said Mclean. This conscious recruitment will

help the program get a running start as they enter competition with the correct personnel.

As he oversees this recruitment process Mclean is also aware of the differences that make the women's version of the sport unique. He says, "Women wrestling is the international and Olympic style. Men wrestle folkstyle collegiately while

women wrestle freestyle."

Finally, before the announcement, the Athletic Department conducted the necessary self-reflection. "When adding any new program a financial analysis is completed to ensure we can support the program," explains Tubman.

When this team hits the mats in 2024 they will be a fully integrated part of the

Muhlenberg athletic family with the full financial, emotional and technical support necessary to succeed. Tubman shares her excitement about "the opportunity to develop more talent and build another successful program. Also, [to] add to the growing local and national landscape of women's wrestling."



read about... **WOMEN'S WRESTLING**  
see "A new team is coming to 'Berg" on page 10

# A never-before-seen national ranking

By EVAN SCHLOTTERBECK  
STAFF WRITER

The Muhlenberg men's lacrosse team began their 2023 campaign by taking the back-to-back defending national champions, the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), to triple overtime, erasing a four-goal deficit in the fourth quarter. While the Mules ultimately lost that game, their gritty comeback followed by the convincing victories over Colorado College and DeSales University earned the team something more special than tallies in the win column.

Following the RIT overtime defeat, the Muhlenberg men's lacrosse team found itself ranked in the top 20 nationally in Division III for the first time in program history, landing 14th on Inside Lacrosse's list and 18th in the United States Intercollegiate Scholastic Association's rankings.

Jake Suesserman '23 speaks to what the ranking means to the program. "A national ranking means a lot, not only to our current team, but to all the past guys in the program who have put in a ton of work to elevate this program to where it is now. It's a huge testament to the skill, talent and competitiveness of our roster this year, as well as to the commitment of the teams that came before us."

This is a tremendous achievement for the team and Muhlenberg College, but the Mules are adamant about ensuring it does not distract them from reaching their goals this season. "It means a lot to be recognized on the national stage," said captain and pre-season all American Ethan Grossman '23. "Our goal has always been to win the Centennial Conference, but after competing with the two-time defending national champions, we have raised our expectations considerably."

Many things went into pushing the team into the national rankings, the most important being their commitment and willingness to remain consistent and dili-



PHOTO BY PHOTO EDITOR AYDEN LEVINE '23

'Berg lacrosse plays against DeSales.

gent in practicing hard and studying film. "Guys are making it a point of emphasis to excel at the little things, both in practice and time away from team-mandated activities," commented Suesserman. "We are playing physically and technically sound defense, sticking to our coaches' game plans, and sharing the ball on offense, helping us generate high percentage shots."

Being a champion in any regard is exceptionally unique. Many teams win games, but few move on to become champions; students, athletes, teachers or coaches that live and breathe hard work and passion for improving, with the ultimate target of winning so often that it makes their competition sick to their stomachs. This ranking shows that the Muhlenberg men's lacrosse team under-

stands what it takes to embody this status.

What goes into accomplishing the goals of a champion, though, often occurs behind the scenes. "We are just trying to get 1 percent better every day," said Suesserman. "We are focusing not only on studying the teams we are going to play but also analyzing our own game to tweak and critique it as we move deeper into the season. Practices have been very competitive in all aspects, and it is clear guys are really bought into doing everything they can to contribute to the ultimate success of our team and program."

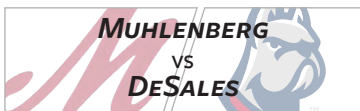
As the Mules move into the heart of a very cutthroat schedule, it will be crucial to continue to push themselves every day to maintain this level of success. The Centennial Conference is one of the

best in Division III, and the Mules are in a great position to compete for the title this spring and preserve their national ranking. "We understand that we have to hold ourselves to a high standard every day to maintain the ranking we have worked so hard for," explains captain and goaltender Max May '23.

Over Spring Break, the men's lacrosse team will travel to St. John Fisher University on Mar. 11 and to the neutral location of Nashville, TN, for a matchup against Emerson College on Mar. 16, two games with the potential to help the Mules build considerable momentum going into their conference schedule.

Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Mar. 9 - Mar. 16

## Women's Lacrosse



Thurs, Mar. 9 @ 3:00 p.m.  
Scotty Wood Stadium

## Men's Wrestling



Fri, Mar. 10 @ 11:00 a.m.  
Roanoke, Va.

## Softball



Mon, Mar. 13 @ 9:00 a.m.  
Central Park Field Complex

## Men's Lacrosse



Thurs, Mar. 16 @ 1:00 p.m.  
Nashville, Tenn.





## IN THIS ISSUE:

# Mules or hawks?

*Muhlenberg is to become Lehigh University's new satellite campus in the near future.*

BY MATTHEW BARESH  
MATTY B RAPS

In recent weeks, rumors have spread amongst students regarding the future of the College. Some say that the temporary closure of Martin Luther Hall for the fall semester indicates the downfall of the College while others discuss the possibility of Muhlenberg turning into a satellite campus. These suspicions were confirmed by a recent email from the College in which an administrator explained the situation.

"Due to the recent decline in enrollment, the College is unable to sustain the current students, faculty and staff," the anonymous administrator explained. "Unfortunately, we have depleted our funds on unnecessary campus events and assets that could have been spent elsewhere. We acknowledge this, and to compensate, we previously increased tuition by five percent for all students to continue hosting these unnecessary events to celebrate accomplishments that

don't need thousands of dollars! This five percent increase has totaled an affordable \$58,005.00 for tuition per year, not including housing and meal plan costs. We hope that our high-paying work-study jobs on campus will help to alleviate these costs. While this effort worked for a month or so, the College has continued to struggle financially. Starting in fall of 2023, Muhlenberg will be transitioning to a satellite campus of Lehigh University. We acknowledge this update's abrupt nature and will offer a free \$5 coupon to Java's Joe for all students! Enjoy this sweet treat before the Muhlenberg Mules cease to exist. Roll Hawks!"

Many students had their suspicions confirmed by this shocking email and demonstrated concerns about the transition to becoming a satellite campus.

One student exclaimed, "What will I do with my merchandise? These t-shirts didn't pay for themselves. However, I'm super excited about the colors of Lehigh's merch. I feel like

white and brown are much more aesthetically pleasing and will go along with my wardrobe much better."

"I am just a freshman and I haven't had much time to get accustomed here yet, and now you're telling me that I'm suddenly a Lehigh student? How much more will the tuition be? I've heard the students have to sell an arm and a leg to pay for just one semester of classes there. Don't get me wrong, I'm excited because Lehigh initially rejected me, but there are just too many questions that are unanswered right now."

Other students had less pressing concerns, saying "I'm just concerned about that hill. Their main campus is literally built on a mountain."

Another anonymous student was relieved about the transition. "I constantly have to correct people at home on how to pronounce the name of the College," he explained. "I always hear, 'what's a Mullenberg?' and then have to give them an English lesson on how to pronounce

simple words. It gets tiring after a while."

The administration hoped to calm the nerves of some students by sending out another message to address these questions.

"Starting in the fall, currently enrolled students will be considered Lehigh students. Professors will remain in their positions, however a new administration will be elected. All student aid will remain the same as well. To celebrate this transition, the Wood Dining Commons will serve bottomless mimosas and burgers made from Marti the Mule. His time is up."

LOGO BY YOUR NEXT WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER MADDIE CILIENTO '25

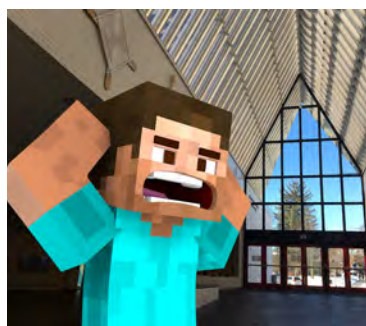


New school logo!

## NEWS

Victor's Lament is going through changes.

**read more on page 5**



## ARTS & CULTURE

The music department is Minecraft: A guide to student survival.

**read more on page 6**



## OP/ED

She's still here? I thought Paige's Page graduated? Well, I still need advice!

**read more on page 9**



## SPORTS

Muhlenberg introduces new sport.

**read more on page 11**

# Muhlenberg Weekly disbands as Yik Yak takes over

*Yik Yak plans to dish out the real news as 'Berg's primary news organization.*

BY SAMANTHA TEMPKIN  
THE NON-MATTHEW IN NEWS

The Muhlenberg Weekly staff will be kissing their office goodbye after this issue to make way for an organization that has proven way more advanced in bringing news to the student body: Yik Yak. The Weekly office will be turning into a private headquarters for Muhlenberg College's official Yik Yak website, which is now available to students and faculty alike as a

portal on OneLogin.

Administrators initially decided that this change was necessary upon comparing engagement and postings from students on Yik Yak with the number of Weekly newspaper issues picked up per week, but they also found that this decision could pose some personal benefits for them. "These days, it seems like there is a disconnect between faculty and students because we live in different worlds at Muhlenberg. We hope that this change

will show students that we are in with the times and close that barrier between us. I also live for the drama," said one administrator. "We are also getting taken over by Lehigh pretty soon so let's give our students one last hurrah while we still can," added another administrator.

"As Muhlenberg's primary news organization, we will commit ourselves to providing our readers with the latest community gossip. We hope that creating an environment in which

people feel free to be haters will bring the Muhlenberg community closer together," said the anonymous editor-in-chief of the College's Yik Yak organization. The Yik Yak staff aims to be completely anonymous, having purchased blackout windows for their office with funding from the Student Government Association (SGA). "It's because we want to keep up with the spirit of the app and totally not because

SEE YIK YAK PAGE 3



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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Cydney Wilson  
Public Enemy #1  
Katherine Conlon  
Wears Invisalign, NOT Braces  
Keanna Peña  
Cydney's Brain Child  
Or-El Ankori  
Shrek  
Harry Glicklin  
Donkey  
Matthew Baresh  
Matty B Raps  
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## CORRECTION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly strives for accuracy in reporting and writing, but we acknowledge that mistakes happen. Readers are invited to submit corrections about errors in articles, and they should be submitted to weeklyeditor@gmail.com. Corrections are also brought to our staff's attention by our own editors and writers. Our staff will review the suggested correction, consult with the author of the article, and issue the appropriate correction. Online corrections are located at the bottom of the article. Print corrections are located within the paper, on the page indicated in the online edition. However, The Weekly does not grant take-down requests for articles.

## ADVERTISING POLICY

We request that advertising material be submitted by the Monday preceding publication at 5 p.m. If materials have not been received at that time, the advertisement will not run and the advertiser is still responsible for 100% payment. We reserve the right to decline any advertisement that is misleading, inaccurate, fraudulent, or deemed generally unacceptable. This determination will be made by the Business Staff in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief. The Muhlenberg Weekly maintains a distinction between its news & editorial content and advertising. As such, advertisements will not be accepted if they imitate the general style of The Weekly, intentionally or unintentionally. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: headlines, bylines, fonts, and column-arrangements. In order to make this distinction, The Weekly also reserves the right to include the word "advertisement" on any advertisement that is deemed too native.

# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

## 3/21/23

Jell-O shots found in the Wood Dining Commons' dessert bar. Individuals identified and spoken to.

ship funds have already been re-allocated towards its repair.

Batcave discovered in basement of Seegers Union.

## 3/24/23

Ceilings falling again in MILE houses.

## 3/22/23

Polar bear found roaming New Science. Investigation is ongoing.

## 3/25/23

A middle-aged woman later identified as a certain college administrator attempted to enter the St. Paddy's Day Keg Crawl with an expired license from the 70s. She was removed from the premises by the authorities.

NUDESLOBS spray painted across Fahy Commons.

Report of strippers at Prosser Hall.

Two cars, not just one, crashed into Benfer.

## 3/23/23

Allentown police were called in to suppress several small riots that broke out after misinformed readers discovered there was no paper this week. Minor damage to the Henry Muhlenberg statue was sustained. Scholar-

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# Joe Biden to speak at Muhlenberg's 2023 final commencement

BY MATTHEW KLINGER  
KLING II

During last year's contested US Senate and House races, Dr. Jill Biden visited the College to support Susan Wild on her campaign to win re-election to the US House of Representatives. She was met on campus with great enthusiasm by the student body and spent the evening in Miller Forum at Moyer Hall giving a speech, meeting students and local voters. Her visit to campus was one of the biggest highlights from the fall of 2022.

However, according to White House insiders, where the College was excited for Dr. Biden to visit campus, President Joe Biden was not. White House senior official Karine Jean-Pierre has stated that the President "felt hurt and left out that Dr. Biden was able to visit campus in the fall while he was not invited. The fact that Muhlenberg College will not exist next year, as it will by that point have become a Lehigh University satellite campus, has exacerbated the issue. This has been a point of contention between the First Couple, and when offering President Biden unlimited ice cream could not solve the issues, Dr. Biden suggested he return to campus in the spring."

Now, just a few short months away from commencement, President Biden has signed Executive Order 14093, titled "My Slay Plan to Get Back at Jill: Visit Muhlenberg College." The EO outlines a new requirement that the President has the power to speak at any college for their commencement should he wish. With the order now being official, Muhlenberg has announced President Biden as the Col-



PHOTO COURTESY OF YOUR NEXT WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER MADDIE CILIENTO '25

lege's 175th (and final) commencement speaker. The College's official press release states that "We are pleased to announce that President Joe Biden has invited himself to speak at Muhlenberg's 2023 Commencement. We are excited by this opportunity to host such an important national figure. We do wish that he would have invited himself last year to help combat our dropping enrollment, though. If he had, the College likely wouldn't be a satellite campus."

In addition to speaking at the commencement ceremony, the College will also present President Biden with an honorary degree with a B.S. in economics. The College, when asked why they

Biden looks at graduating class with excitement.

chose that specific degree to present to Biden, stated that "He actually requested it himself. We're honestly shocked that he wanted an economics degree from us, considering how broke we currently are."

In preparation for his commencement speech, President Biden has recently gone on various TV shows across the country, including Rachel Madow's MSNBC evening show. On the show, when asked about what he plans to speak to Muhlenberg seniors about, Biden stated that "In three words: how to be successful." He further elaborated that the key to success involves "eating lots of ice cream with President Obama, being kind to one another, and, while it's probably too late,

not choosing a college that somehow went under in less than three years. Believe it or not, I have lived for over 80 years, so I have a good idea of what success does and does not look like." Biden was also asked what he was most excited for when visiting campus. He said that "I am by far most excited for the soft-serve machine at the dining hall. But beyond that, I am also excited to stay in the state-of-the-art dorm buildings, especially the beautiful Martin Luther (ML) Hall. While I have heard some say that it's mid, I think that's cap. I stan it. I just love the architecture styling, especially the exposed piping and the mysterious stains in the carpets." President Biden does not yet know that ML will be closed by the time he visits in May.

Students are excited for Joe Biden to come to campus. Esther Klinger '25, who does not yet know of Muhlenberg's plan to become a Lehigh University satellite campus, says "I think it is so cool that President Biden is coming to campus. I feel like it will really put our school on the map, especially since enrollment has been slipping the last few years. Hopefully having someone as prominent as Joe Biden coming to campus will help recruit more students to campus."

President Kathleen Harring is not fond of Biden's visit, saying "Personally, I don't like having a president with more power than me coming here. Who is he to think that just because he has the title 'president' that he is somehow so special."

## FROM YIK YAK PAGE 1

we are afraid of being held accountable for what gets said. I really do not think we have to worry about our identities being disclosed to the public because we are determined to refrain from saying anything that will make us easily identifiable. In other words, our possibilities are boundless-I really love that word," said the Yik Yak faculty advisor.

Muhlenberg's Yik Yak will continue to produce weekly newspapers just as the Weekly did, but plans to implement changes that will help the organization accomplish its mission of stirring the pot. For instance, Campus Safety notes will no longer be anonymous and will include the names of students who had Campo called on them, whether they were scream-singing on the soccer field at 2 a.m. or crashing their car into a dorm building. The sections of traditional newspapers will be replaced with articles that explore the week's latest rumors, roasts, confessions, complaints and call-outs. Further basing the information it provides on the app's most common posts, the newspapers will also include party scheduling, touch-starved person of the week and a lot of oversharing.

Although Yik Yak's first newspaper issue will be released next week, the Col-

lege has not wasted time adding the application as a portal on OneLogin, and members of the Muhlenberg community have already begun posting. Some have even commented on this very change, saying things like "R.I.P. 'Berg Weekly'" and "I can't wait to use Yik Yak to procrastinate my homework even more. It's a part of my education now." It also seems that making Yik Yak available on OneLogin has made it widely available to all members of the Muhlenberg community. Recent posts include, "Why are my students so happy when I end class early? Do they hate me :(" and "to my student sitting in the 3rd row on the far right I know you're playing Minecraft during my class."

The Weekly staff is disheartened to be disbanding after 140 years of serving the 'Berg community. "I at least hope that our staff feels a weight lifted off of their shoulders without the fear of being blacklisted by the Muhlenberg community," said editor-in-chief Cydney Wilson. "I guess I wish the Yik Yak club luck, but I just know that the administration is going to come crawling back to us because the Weekly stays winning."

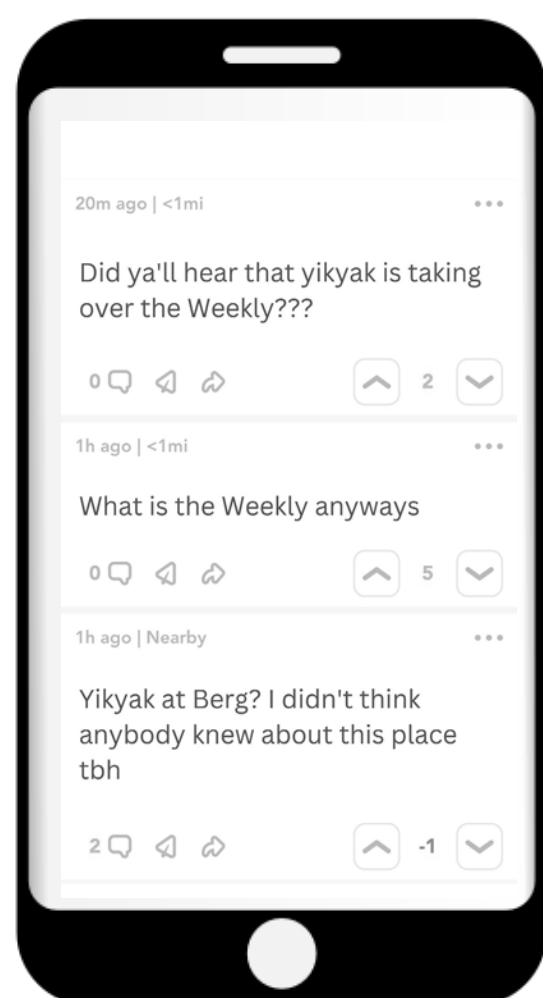


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# Representative George Santos to speak at commencement, following Biden backlash

BY KATHERINE CONLON  
HAS INVISALIGN, NOT BRACES

It was recently announced that President Joe Biden would be speaking at Muhlenberg's 2023 commencement after feeling left out by his wife Dr. Jill Biden's visit to the College last semester. This announcement was not well-received by all members of the student body, with many demanding the political science department find a suitable conservative figure to speak at graduation and counter Biden's views. On Mar. 27, it was announced that Representative of New York's 3rd congressional district George Santos was selected for the honor.

This decision has since sparked outrage among students, staff and faculty, primarily due to Santos's controversial rise to elected office. The Congressman has been accused of lying to constituents about most of his credentials. Editor-in-Chief of The Muhlenberg Weekly Cydney Wilson '23 stated that "this is ridiculous. I seriously bet it was the Panhellenic Council that put them up to this. I mean, the Muhlenberg sororities account posted about Condoleezza Rice on Instagram, I knew they were giving Republican energy." Wilson denied to comment regarding whether or not she will be attending any Greek life formals later this semester.

Political Science Department Chair Brian Mello, Ph.D., attempted to explain the reasoning behind this choice saying, "when the department was tasked with finding a suitable alternative for students with more conservative leanings, Santos was the obvious choice." When asked to

elaborate on this, Mello redirected the conversation by bringing up his revised plan for the general academic requirements.

Professor of Political Science Lanethea Mathews-Schultz, Ph.D., countered Mello's statement saying, "Mello can believe whatever he wants and say Santos is the best option. The reality is that we just couldn't get anyone else. Only Santos and Marjorie Taylor Greene replied to our emails. Marjorie's email was incoherent and had a link in it that gave my laptop a virus, so we decided to go with George."

Assistant Professor of Political Science Ross Dardani, Ph.D., expressed his disappointment with the department's pick saying, "I mean do people even know who George Santos is? Why not get a big name like John Roberts or Clarence Thomas? Even better, get them both! Then they can debate theories of constitutional interpretation! Now that would be entertaining."

The Weekly reached out to Representative Santos' team for a statement and received the following recorded response: "I, Senator George Santos, am thrilled to be speaking at Moravian College. I actually received a couple credits here, before transferring to Oxford, so I know my way around these halls. I can still remember the smell of the... books in the library and the sound of birds chirping on the... lawn. I even played a little football back in my day. What position? The best one. I loved picking up my copy of the Moravian paper and reading a new issue every day. I can't wait to come back to a place where I hold so many, very real, fond memories.



PHOTO BY KATHERINE CONLON '24

SGA President Benjamin Eber ('23) remarks on his excitement about Santos' visit. "Who is George Santos?"

Go Moles!"

President Kathleen Harring, Ph.D., told The Weekly her feelings on the matter noting, "No I don't care that George Santos is speaking. Why? Cause if we give him an honorary degree then we can technically count him as a student. And since we're having a little bit of a problem getting people to come here... I'm gonna take what I can get."

Some students were excited to see their own representative come to their campus. "I think it's great that a little piece of my home, Long Island, is coming to campus! As my district rep, Santos is exactly the man I want congratulating me at graduation. Maybe I'll get him to sign my degree!" said Ayden Levine '23.

## ML Underground under... under... idk

*The residence hall common space begins renovations to become a nightclub.*

BY SINHAYANA SRINIVASAN  
SIRRELEVANT

There have been many rumors and conspiracy theories regarding the shut down of the Martin Luther residence hall. Why is it being shut down? Is it for renovation? Will it be used for something else?

Well it has been finally confirmed—Martin Luther is going to be transformed. A fresh new nightclub is going to be opened, and it is going to be the place in town. Named the "Dirty Carpet," the construction of it will begin in Summer 2023 and will officially open in December right in time for the opening celebration of the College as a Lehigh satellite campus.

The nightclub will be a restaurant by

day, serving a different variety of Sodexo-made foods, including but not limited to bagel bombs, Mule fingers, Lehigh hawk wings and other fast food snacks. During the night, entry will only be 21 and above, and be one of the most happening clubs in the city.

There will be a bar, manned by Awa, and a special dance space for people to littawally hit the g witty.

The space can also be booked by committees and third parties as event spaces. Muhlenberg, or any clubs or organizations part of Muhlenberg, can use the club as a potential space for any events or parties they might want to host! When one student heard about this, they were excited and said "I am really looking forward to this! I always felt that there weren't many

things close to Muhlenberg that we could go to, so this is perfect. And now my Taylor Swift appreciation club can have a dedicated space for our karaoke nights and people victimized by Jake Gyllenhal support group!"

One of the most important things of a night club is the music, and Dirty Carpet has strong plans to not fail in that aspect. They plan on hosting both open mics and DJ nights. Various artists will come and perform during some days of the week, including Jacob Sartorius who will be the opening night act performing his hit "Sweatshirt." One student said how "I usually don't enjoy nightclubs because the music is just not my style. But when I heard that Dirty Carpet will be inviting open mic musicians as well, that piqued

my interest. I really love to play at open mics, yeah some people say my music is pretentious, but who doesn't want to hear me play the same three Beatles songs every time I whip out my guitar!"

There is a lot of effort being put into this new venture, lots of people are involved and most cannot wait for it to open and be the sweet new hangout spot in Allentown! Another student said how "I really like partying and having fun especially when its on school grounds, when I am of age...incredibly legally. Was that okay President Harring?!"



# From Sesame Street to Chew Street

BY HARRY GLICKLIN  
DONKEY

Devastation erupts as a decades-long franchise experiences severe bankruptcy, causing the Sesame Place amusement park, a popular Bucks County, PA, attraction based on the famed Sesame Street television program, to close down, leaving dozens of Muppets without work. Muhlenberg, however, is always quick to lend a helping hand, offering to hire the entire cohort with on-campus jobs administratively, educationally and in unfulfilled work-study positions.

Students are not happy with these new changes. Elmo Monster, Associate Professor of Geography, has received terrible feedback on his course, “Elmo’s World: Exploration of the Globe Through Song,” because the three-year-old professor scribbles gibberish in crayon, making it increasingly difficult to take notes, as they are impossible to understand. The content in the course has also been described as “non-existent,” says an anonymous student, “Professor Monster can’t even reach the board!” In a conversation with The Weekly, the new educator states “Elmo can’t read,” with an innocent smile. It is unclear how much preparation was provided to the incoming employees before placement.

Other new hires include Java Joe’s baristas Bert and Ernie, Plant Ops Assistant Oscar the Grouch, and Wood Dining

Commons Sous Chef Big Bird who “thinks he saw one of his friends get cooked at Chef’s Table.” Fortunately, however, it was jackfruit nachos day, and as someone whose love language is quality time, Big Bird just missed his old poultry pal.

The rapid increase in salaried employees has caused the College to struggle financially. When looking at the remaining collegiate funds, Assistant to the Associate Dean of Financial Aid Count von Count could not present numbers greater than three... dollars. Another, more major expense to the College is the requirement that all buildings be raised four feet higher to give “space to allow the Muppets to move around,” says their lawyer. Passersby are judgemental of this change, stating that they’ve never seen any Muppets enter a room, they simply appear through the floor. “I just thought they needed somewhere to live,” says an anonymous yet empathetic student whose chances of living in off-campus housing have been taken away. The junior also stated that they have seen Big Bird entering through one of Muhlenberg’s signature red doors, but struggled due to his taller stature. When told to duck, the sous chef replied “no I’m not, I’m Big Bird.”

“On her first day, Abby Cadabby approached me, asking, ‘Can you tell me how to get, how to get to Sesame Street?’ It seems that, just like Professor Monster, the employees were not given any orientation before their first day on the job,”

shared Katie Conlon ‘24. “I am also concerned about the ages of these new employees. Shouldn’t they be in school?”

Isaac Shulman ‘25 stated “I was fortunate enough to share a meal with Cookie Monster, a new Hillel Engagement Intern, though it was difficult to understand him due to his constant consumption of cookies. I, too, was enjoying my chocolate chip cookie, which according to the kitchen staff was the last one available after CM’s pass through DHall, where he screamed ‘cookie’ while lifting the tray out from the dessert case and taking it to his seat.”



# Victor’s Lament is rapidly shrinking

BY AMY SWARTZ & MAGGIE LOCKWOOD  
A CAPELLA ENTHUSIASTS

It’s a blustery day in early December. Light snow is falling, with a thin layer finally sticking to the ground. Muhlenberg students are walking down academic row, hunched over, with their hoods up high, sheltering them from the harsh winds. Yet, one thing still stands strong—Victor’s Lament. The focal point of campus, the statue that attracts the eye of all long-time faculty members and first year students alike.

Maggie Lockwood ‘26, a first year student herself, succumbed to the wonder that is Victor’s Lament, and was mesmerized with what she saw before her eyes. But, this was something different than usual. The eye-catching statue right was gleaming with snow, red with wonder. She had an epiphany—Victor’s Lament was getting smaller. How could this be? What could be behind this nonsense? She told Amy Swartz ‘26, the only person who was as much of a conspiracist as her, and we immediately knew our only mission—that we had to get to the bottom of the case.

Now with a mission in hand, we knew right where to begin. Immediately, we sprinted to Haas, to ask Kenyamo McFarlane ‘00, assistant director of admissions. He is a Muhlenberg alum himself, and during his time here was an RA, a member of SGA and played both football and basketball for the school, and now back in the Office of Admissions. If anything, he is beyond qualified to give us a statement

on his thoughts on the shrinking of Victor’s Lament. He stated that “When I was here, Victor’s Lament was a lot taller, and when I walked by a couple of weeks ago, I noticed that it was a lot closer to my head. I feel like it’s shrinking little by little every year!” When asked about the potential impacts for the Muhlenberg community, McFarlane highlighted how “Victor’s Lament is a staple of our campus, and people come to campus and ask ‘What is that’ and I say ‘That’s Victor’s Lament!’ and they understand, so we’re going to have to find something to replace that.”

After hearing McFarlane’s riveting statement, we knew we had to keep going, dig deeper. Clearly, this was something with a story behind it, with a catalyst responsible for the impending destruction.

We decided to take to the streets of Muhlenberg’s campus to get to the bottom of this, to ask students if they’ve noticed anything different, and what could be behind the pressing issue at hand. From Parent’s Plaza to Academic Row, the windows of GQ to the Fishbowl, we asked copious amounts of students their opinions on the matter, and their theories behind it. Jem Berney ‘26 passionately gave their opinion “Yes. I think it’s shrinking. It’s looking about my size, and that’s pretty small if I must say so myself. I’ve noticed it’s getting smaller, like a grape turning into a raisin, and it’s happening right before my eyes. I think it’s the football team. They cause a lot of drama, and they’ve got to be behind this. Because they’re eating all of the food in the dining

hall, so Victor’s Lament is getting nothing. How’s Victor’s Lament supposed to get gains in these conditions when the football team is always at the grill?”

Zachary Huseman ‘26 gave more of a feasible theory, “I just feel like Victor’s Lament is a symbol of the student body as a whole, and since the student body is shrinking, it only make sense that Victor’s Lament would be shrinking as well.” The theories are rampant, and with no party to place the guilt on, we still have one big question on our hands.

Some students even gave practical advice on how we could quantitatively get to the bottom of the issue. Jason Rackas ‘26, a student of mathematics, suggested that “we measure the height of it now, wait a week, make sure it rains, and then maybe it’ll sink into the ground a little bit, and then maybe we can see again.”

Ella Blumental ‘26, also gave some practical advice, urging us to “draw lines close to the bottom and then measure how close it is to the ground, then wait a week, then measure the line.” Clearly, Muhlenberg students have very impassioned ideas on how to solve this life-altering issue that can change the entire trajectory of their college experience.

Though Muhlenberg students have insight on some riveting theories that they believe could be responsible for the slow, yet steady, decline of Victor’s Lament, one thing is for certain: There is something suspicious going on. Worst case scenario, if Victor’s Lament is declining and we will soon need a replacement, McFarlane of-

Students are thrilled to be enrolled at an institution that cares for others and gives them the opportunities they need to succeed, especially in such a difficult time. However, there were other places for Muhlenberg to put their funds. Looking on the bright side, students are constantly starstruck by the Muppets they see around campus, and hope to continue building relationships with them.

ferred an alternative that is very true to Muhlenberg and our campus culture. “A huge inflatable Marti the Mule, that way we can just deflate it whenever we want to. We can dress it up for different holidays, birthdays and celebrations around campus. I think we’re onto something!” Maybe, the shrinking of Victor’s Lament could lead Muhlenberg into a new era, complete with Marti the Mule as the focal point of campus.

Or, could something more sinister be going on. Is Muhlenberg trying to make room for an outlandish new edition to campus on the ruins of Victor’s Lament? Are they putting a new parking lot on the green? Are they constructing a new dorm to replace ML? The motives behind the disappearing of Victor’s Lament are unclear, but we will not stop until we discover the intentions of the guilty party.







# ARTS & CULTURE

## The Weekly Watch: Cocaine Bear

### *How a single film changed one school's liberal arts film education forever.*

BY DANNY MILKIS  
THE EMPEROR OF ARTS & CULTURE

On Friday, Feb. 24, the world as we know it was changed forever thanks to the long-awaited release of a single cinematic film: Elizabeth Banks's blockbuster masterpiece, "Cocaine Bear." Still in theaters to this day, "Cocaine Bear" is a piece of media that has left many aspiring filmmakers enrolled in Muhlenberg's film department awestruck, and freshly inspired to change the world through the satirization of apex predators on drugs.

The film is itself a spinoff of the true story of an incident in 1985 about a 200-pound American black bear ingesting cocaine in a forest in Georgia. Today, the film has taken audiences by storm, generating record-breaking profit at the box office and attracting attention from students across the diverse disciplines of the Muhlenberg community.

"I'm sorry, this was a really good movie," says patron and AMC A-Lister Kayla Hartman '24. "I live for 'Cocaine Bear' now."

Even though the content included the

heavy usage of drugs, violent bear attacks and the destruction of property, the Muhlenberg community continued to show up at the box office, and even began to embrace the extremity and absurdity of the film as art in its purest form.

While its genre-defying combination of imposing fear-mongering mixed with light-hearted comedy is aesthetically appealing, its advertising makes it easy to assume that "Cocaine Bear" only appeals to lovers of all things horror and comedy. However, the film provided a little something for everyone, and it even gave some viewers, like Anna Holmwood '24, a warm and fuzzy feeling inside.

Anna Holmwood '24 explained, "My favorite part of 'Cocaine Bear' was when we realized that there were baby cocaine bears. I think it kind of 'humanized' the [matriarch] cocaine bear and I wasn't as mad at her."

When asked if the satirization of apex predators on drugs should continue in the film industry, film enthusiast Anna Bobok '23 gave a rousing "definitely."

"It wasn't satire though," continued Bobok. "I felt the deep pain of every char-

acter on screen, and it was a deeply emotional film from beginning to end."

As previously mentioned, the student film studies community at Muhlenberg, whose scholarly entity boasts a far-reaching, successful alumni network as well as numerous guest artist panels and various festivals and coursework to showcase and develop student work, was overjoyed at the ways in which the release of "Cocaine Bear" is inspiring even more students to engage with the major and to create impactful work surrounding the issues in the film.

Some students, like junior history & French double major Madi Leonard '24, who didn't previously have an interest in film, explained that "'Cocaine Bear' has inspired me to never become a filmmaker."

However, this opinion is not in the majority. In speaking to student filmmaker Davis Reynolds '23, who is heavily involved in the student film scene, he was able to further illuminate the ways in which "Cocaine Bear" has helped him in all aspects of production, to become a more inclusive, well-rounded creative at

Muhlenberg.

"'Cocaine Bear' is the 'Star Wars' of its time. I'm expecting that not only will this film be the beginning of a series, but that it will be the eventual beginning of a cultural revolution. The score is masterful, the characters are quirky yet incredibly dark and the score is brooding and utterly haunting. I'd give this a twelve out of ten."



Two random bears cuddling. This could be us but you're not here right now.

## The music department is Minecraft

### *Here's your survival guide to stay alive in Muhlenberg's Overworld.*

BY DANNY MILKIS  
THE EMPEROR OF ARTS & CULTURE

If you're a music student and you've ever walked into the Baker Center for the Arts (CA) for your weekday theory classes, you might remember seeing a few very conspicuous signs that the goings-on of the music department faculty are not what they seem. In fact, only the enlightened few participants in a rousing, culty internet phenomenon can fully explain what's going on here and the real truth of the matter is blocky.

That's right, the Muhlenberg music department is a real-life manifestation of the smash hit PC and console building game Minecraft, and below is an exclusive guide to cobble together your education as a music student, one brick at a time.

Will Howitt '23, a composition student in the music department, said, "Have you ever wondered how the music department has so much paper to make all the programs for the music events? An automatic sugarcane farm."



The Recital Hall is the music department's central hub for all things classical performance art, and hosts a number of workshops, recitals and guest lectures given by the music department on various Friday afternoons and evenings throughout the school year.

However, the adjoining vestibule on

the ground level of the space, which connects the Recital Hall with the first floor music offices, holds a great many secrets.

This year's opera workshop performance and the student performance of "Gossamer: An Alpine Folk Opera," make use of set pieces molded in the shape of boxes, varying in size, color and texture, and these boxes are tucked away in the

back section of the vestibule, away from the prying eyes of non-musicians.

An anonymous performer, singing tenor in this year's opera workshop, explained "Minecraft is my favorite game of all time, and I was so overjoyed to find a music program that spoke to not just one but all of my specific tastes. I feel seen and also heard."

"The key that unlocks the recital hall piano also unlocks the safe where they hid the ender dragon egg," added Howitt.

Remember, dear reader, creepers are our friends, and it's always a good idea to follow our friends. So, if you're looking for a top notch music education, look no further than our blocky green friend in the CA, and follow the big staircase to salvation.

"As someone who has collected all 15 music disks throughout the CA, I think that you should stop this investigation before you get trapped in bedrock," concluded Howitt.

There is no additional information at this time.



# Putting a price on the arts at Muhlenberg

*Say goodbye to the CA as you know it, Muhlenberg.*

BY SHINAM HUSSAIN  
THE LOUDEST PERSON IN THE ROOM

If you have ever attended a dance show, a theatre production, had an art class, or even attended office hours with an English professor, you are probably familiar with Muhlenberg's Dorothy Baker Center for the Arts (CA). The CA has been home to countless dance and theatre productions, art exhibits, vocal performances and more. However, as this academic year comes to a close, the Muhlenberg community will have to bid the CA as we know it a farewell.

Muhlenberg has announced that the Dorothy Baker Center for the Arts will no longer be serving as an arts building for years to come. When Lehigh takes over, instead of a building used for performing and fine arts, it will be utilized as a residential building. In an email sent out to the entire student body, Muhlenberg informed its students that the landmark arts building will have a new purpose.

If that sounds familiar to you, then you may be remembering when Muhlenberg did seemingly the exact same thing

with Martin Luther Hall (ML). Recently, Muhlenberg announced the closing of ML beginning the Fall 2023 semester. The student response to ML closing was less than ideal, therefore, it could be an easy assumption to make that Muhlenberg has learned not to drastically change housing. However, the CA closure would make it the second time they close a major building, and as the saying goes, third time's the charm, right?

There is a question to be asked about how Muhlenberg, a college that is praised for its performing arts scene, will function adequately without the building that hosts nearly all of the performances. That is a question unanswered currently. The email gave scant information on what this new initiative will look like. One of the only pieces of information given to us is that the CA practice rooms will be serving as dorms. However, it stated in the email that if students wish to know more about this new initiative, that there will be two information sessions later in the week.

Eva Vaquera '23 expressed her thoughts on the new move, stating "It's not a dorm already? I see people sleeping in the

sculpting studio all the time."

The email sparked considerable outrage. Many students expressed concern about how performing arts would continue. Other students stated their disappointment with how Muhlenberg made such an important and transformative decision without providing any transparency. Again. With such a strong reaction from the student body, Muhlenberg sent out another email days after the news broke, offering students a free Java Joe's drink to appease the student's and their anger towards the complete transformation of the CA.

Talk about putting a price on art.

Many students have their own thoughts regarding this situation, ranging from defeat, to anger, to making light of the situation. Ashley Kim '25 stated "I'm just jealous of whoever gets the theaters for their rooms."

Ana Erickson '25 vocalized "I think it would be nice considering it's already decorated. I wouldn't have to bring any of my own decorations for a dorm room."

Vaquera made light of the situation by jokingly saying, "The CA is where the

English department is, so this makes sense. The English department puts everyone to sleep."

The CA has served as a cornerstone for the Muhlenberg community, and has been home to countless talents cultivated here, including notable alum Frankie Grande, at Muhlenberg. It is hard to believe that the beloved arts building will no longer host the culmination of talents here at Muhlenberg. Students are choosing to see a possible brightside, by stating that the CA is far better than our existing residential halls.

Syeda Islam '23 said, "I think this is a great idea. It's a huge step up from our existing dorms, right? Tons of natural light, good acoustics, and beautiful art all over."

An anonymous student said, "Well the soundproof rooms are going to come in handy."

BY KEANNA PEÑA

# "Rocky Horror" takes control over CA

*Dr. Frank-N-Furter has found a new home at Muhlenberg College.*

BY SHAIYAN FEISAL  
CHRONIC PROCRASTINATOR

"The Rocky Horror Picture Show" is a well-known Muhlenberg tradition. Each semester there is a student-run performance where students lip sync and dance while the movie is played in the background with a different theme each semester. The cast of Rocky Horror practices every Tuesday night at The Red Door. However, the enthusiasm regarding the Rocky Horror Picture Show has gone a step further than just student-led programs. The Muhlenberg administration recently announced that Dr. Frank-N-Furter now owns the Dorothy Baker Center for the Arts (CA).

Dr. Frank-N-Furter taking over the CA was confirmed by the Muhlenberg administration via email. The email states, "We are excited to announce that the Doro-

thy Baker Center for the Arts will now be changed to Dr. Frank-N-Furter's Center for the Arts. In addition, Dr. Frank-N-Furter will now be living in the CA given that it will be converted into a dorm. We encourage Muhlenberg students and faculty to interact with Dr. Frank-N-Furter if you see him around on campus." Some students are convinced that he gave a lot of money to Muhlenberg, which is why Muhlenberg allowed him to make drastic changes to the building. An anonymous student said, "I'm wondering why he chose the CA when he easily could have had Muhlenberg build a new building for him. He's the infamous Dr. Frank-N-Furter, he easily could have convinced Muhlenberg to do more for him."

The exterior of the CA hasn't been altered, but it's clear that there have been changes made to the interior as soon as

## BREAKING NEWS

March 30, 2023



### Bowling and Brunch Collide: New Alley to Serve Strikes and Maple Syrup

Starting on April 1, construction will begin on a state-of-the-art bowling alley located in the basement of Jay's Local.



2301 W. Liberty Street, Allentown



BY AYDEN LEVINE  
TEACHER

Eber commented on his beloved tattoo, “You’ll never guess where it is...”



I-slobs, you-slobs, we-slobs, Nudeslobs.

Ultimate Frisbee team President Ethan Citron '23 said, "As a proud supporter of NUDESLOBS and all it stands for, I am happy to give up our go to throwing spaces to

Hopefully, the installation of this new artwork will once again unite the community. Perhaps this will be enough to save us from Lehigh's impending takeover.

PHOTO BY TOOK PHOTOSHOP IN HIGH SCHOOL SAMANTHA COHEN '26

[illegible]



# OPINIONS & OPINIONS & OPINIONS & OPINIONS & OPINIONS



## Paige's Page

BY PAIGE WEISBURG  
DIDN'T SHE GRADUATE?

Hey besties, did you miss me? If you are reading this, you are probably confused, maybe you're saying to yourself: "didn't she graduate?" or "can she leave?" Yes I did, and also, no <3. I just could not, in good conscience, make my final Paige's Page EVER super sappy and emotional, that's just so not me. I started writing this column because it's fun and because I like sharing my opinions. This week we are getting silly, because this happens to be a very special edition of The Muhlenberg Weekly. Without further ado, let's get started.

Hi Paige, I'm a senior and I was wonder-

**Q** ing how I should respond to my friends and family asking me what I'm doing after graduation in May without screaming in their faces. What have you done about this?

Hey bestie! I absolutely adore this question. As someone that graduated in December, I have been getting asked about my life plans for almost a year now. Luckily, I exited college with a job so my friends and family don't see me as a completely talentless flop. The way I have dealt with this, specifically with regard to my family is by being mildly rude so they don't ask again. Will these full grown adults see your tone as a problem? Yes. Am I too old for them to say that I have an attitude with a straight face? Yes. Will they ask EVER again? Nope. So I'm not saying yell at your friends and family, but if you purposefully make the interaction uncomfortable, they will not bombard you with these questions at holidays, family parties, in their happy birthday texts, and so many more inappropriate occasions. Now you may be wondering, "Paige, if I am rude to my friends and family who genuinely want to know what is going on in my life, why would they want to continue to be around me in any capacity?" To that, I would say, change is hard and people probably won't hold it against you.

**Q** Hey Paige, I know Paige's Page is gone forever so I wanted to admit something to you with the security that you won't ever see this, I love you. I have loved you for a long time from afar and I have always been terrified to tell you because I didn't think it would be reciprocated and being at Muhlenberg is so hard without seeing your beautiful face and incredible fashion choices every single day. I don't know how much longer I can be in Allentown, Pennsylvania, without you. Please come back so we can be together forever.

Hi bestie. Sorry about this... While I am quite flattered, where was this energy when I still went here? Three and a half years at this fine institution with zero romantic prospects has made me certain of the fact that the love of my life is not at Muhlenberg. For those of you who have found love here, I hope you get married, and if you need someone to officiate, let your girl know, because I have been an ordained minister of the Universal Life Church for almost 4 years now so I'm ready to go whenever. But anyways, back to the point at hand, I have been back on campus far more than anyone who isn't my close friend wants me here anyway, stop being boring. One thing that I have learned by coming back to Muhlenberg without facing any consequences for my

actions is that you can do literally anything you want and nothing matters. Tell your crush you like them, and if they don't like you back, that is their loss and you don't lose anything by putting yourself out there. Love ya!

**Q** Hi Paige! Big fan of your work. Something has been bothering me lately though and I was hoping you could clear it up: I have never seen you and Frankie Grande in the same room. I'm not saying you ARE Frankie but I'm also not not saying that. Can you explain? Thanks!

Hey bestie, I'm actually not taking any more questions at this time. Thank you so much and have an incredible life.

And with that, happy April Fools! Thank you to The Weekly for saving one final space for me in the op-ed section. I am forever grateful for the opportunities Paige's Page has given me. Thank you to my besties forever for reading and laughing with me. Follow me on Instagram if you just can't get enough of me @paige-weisburg. And for the author of question #2 (and others), my DMs are open.

Forever yours, Paige's Page xo

## Why I'm transferring (as a second semester senior)

BY CYDNEY WILSON  
PUBLIC ENEMY #1

After 3.75 years at Muhlenberg, I've decided it's time to say goodbye.

The lack of parking and constant tickets, the Yik Yak subtweets, the disintegrating MLE houses and loss of ML have become too much for me. There aren't enough stuff-a-plushes or free Javas that could convince me to stay.

If you want to write me a letter of recommendation, I am currently accepting them to my Muhlenberg email before it is deactivated.

College administrators are rejoicing at my choice to leave, and thus will personally be moving me out.

Ultimately, the real reason I'm transferring is because I want my degree to be from an institution that's still accredited.

And so, this is my goodbye letter. Don't worry, I'm sure I'll still see you grabbing lunch in Bethlehem as I'm grabbing my degree at Lehigh (where I will be paid at least a whole dollar higher/hour than at Muhlenberg). Good luck everyone!

Love,  
Cydney ('23 at Lehigh)

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor (bergweeklyoped@gmail.com) or the Editor-in-Chief (weeklyeditor@gmail.com) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.



*Tiny horoscopes for a tiny campus*

# MICRO-ASTROLOGY

*Weekly advice and predictions*

Communicated to The Weekly staff by (shrinking) Victor's Lament

The stars have spoken, and they've decided to update the astrological signs. Take a look at the guide below for your new identity. Look carefully, you might have more than one!

**Graphing Calculator (Preemie babies)**

If you are one thing, it is a go-getter! You're not one to avoid your responsibilities, and tend to tackle life head on. This is good, because unfortunately you're also short so you kinda need the advantage.

**Apple Watch (March 15 1918-1954, April 15 1955-2019 and 2022, July 15 2020, May 17 2021)**

You're an expensive person. Whether for medical reasons, a tendency to break things or being a little too into online shopping, you cost your parents and yourself a lot of money! Either you own a Tesla, want to own a Tesla, or have at least three different prescription medications.

**25¢ Tire Air Pump (February 29)**

Oof. Be careful when you're making deals, otherwise you might accidentally commit yourself to sailing with a pirate ship until your 21st birthday, not your 21st year of life, and then feel duty bound to stay on until you're in your 80s instead of marrying your true love who you only met like an hour ago only to be saved by her father who changes his mind and convinces you to stay and get married after all... or something.

**Blonde Extensions (Anyone born on a US Government recognized holiday)**

You crave the spotlight in a big way, and you just can't get enough. Some people might think it's pick-me energy, but even they have to admit you're the life of the party. You can be flaky at times, but it's exhausting being single-handedly responsible for bringing the fun!

**Space Heater (People born between 9am and 5pm)**

It's not that you're lazy, it's just that you prioritize your peace. You have no problem saying no to things, and frequently lie about having plans when you really just want to chill at home by yourself.

**Novelty "Toothpick Holder" (September 15-November 28, and people born nine months after their parents' anniversary)**

Whether you were the product of love or holiday drink specials, there's no denying your natural passion and drive. You take great pride in being the liability of your friend group, but you're the first person they call after a breakup.

**Sleep Deprived Nursing Student (Everyone not born in a hospital)**

Most likely to survive a zombie apocalypse; you probably like camping, leaving your phone at home and/or historical fiction. You've been roughing it since the day you were born, and no toilet paper shortage or rise in egg prices is gonna get you down.

**Flower Crown (breech babies)**

I'm not saying you're dumb, I'm just saying you had to google what "breech" meant. You're a really nice person, but you've been the inspiration for the saying "you only had one job" since birth. On the bright side, you'd probably be really good at gymnastics.

**Curtains (any Friday the 13th)**

You've got a dark side, and might be a bit accident prone, but you mean well. You're excellent at relieving tension with some well-timed dark humor, and your makeup is consistently slaying.

**X-Acto Knife (people born anywhere in the US between West Virginia and Nevada)**

You give Cryptid; one day you just walked out of the woods/field/desert and into our lives without any warning whatsoever. Most people don't really know what to do with you, but a select few are absolutely obsessed with you and wherever you came from. You would make a great cult leader.

**Passenger Princess (March 17, April 30)**

You are hotter and better than other people. You have incredible natural talent, and whatever you do you look damn sexy while doing it. Keep up the good work.

**Parallelogram (The rest of you)**

Consider yourself the lawful-neutral of the star signs. Not everyone can be special, and that's ok! Every good TV show needs extras to take up space and carry things, and real life is no different. You're known for your luke-warm takes and mid advice, and you'll probably go on to have a perfectly average life!

# Notes from someone who may or may not be studying abroad

BY INCOGNITO DISNEY ADULT  
(WHO MAY OR MAY NOT BE STUDYING ABROAD)

Hi world,

Or should I say self?

As I ponder the landscape around me and my desire to be, but also thrive, I question who I am. Where I am. Why I am. While I ponder these questions, my struggle is reflected. Am I abroad?

Why the answer may seem simple, I'm afraid it is not. What if I am stuck in a new campus of Muhlenberg? What if I am actually just currently residing in the hills of Dorney Park, but hold the Dorney?

I mean Professor Vigneri was here, so am I really abroad? But she left... So it must mean then... Maybe it was an illusion. Or... I think I'm stuck in the world showcase at EPCOT. I did apply to the Disney College Program (DCP), but I didn't realize how realistic it would be. Studying abroad in the wild world of Disney, and Florida of course.

But maybe that's not true. I reflect and I think I am definitely in a different country. Whenever I hear "as a study abroad student," whispered on campus or in conversations, I feel the power of the phrase. I too see in the mirror a study abroad student. I see the Galway Girl staring back at me everyday.

I go on a walking tour as the study abroad student. I walk into class as the study abroad student. I eat dinner as the study abroad student. I sit as the study abroad student. I stare at the wall as the study abroad student.

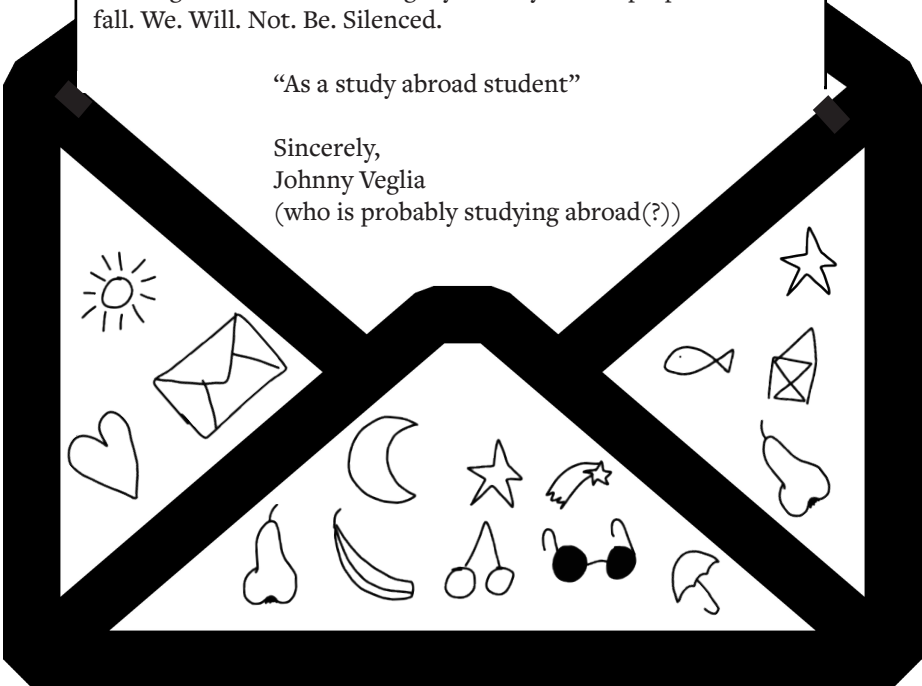
The question of self identity may go on, but at least I know I know I am definitely abroad. I hope you all are having as much fun as I am, but if you're not, I am sorry to hear it. But you can only be that annoying study abroad student once in your life.

Who knows, it might be twice with the DCP. Then the world will truly know chaos. Get ready for the vlogs though. <3

Sending love and abroad magic your way and be prepared for the fall. We. Will. Not. Be. Silenced.

"As a study abroad student"

Sincerely,  
Johnny Veglia  
(who is probably studying abroad(?))





# SPOSRT POSSRTPOS

## Pro-Pong

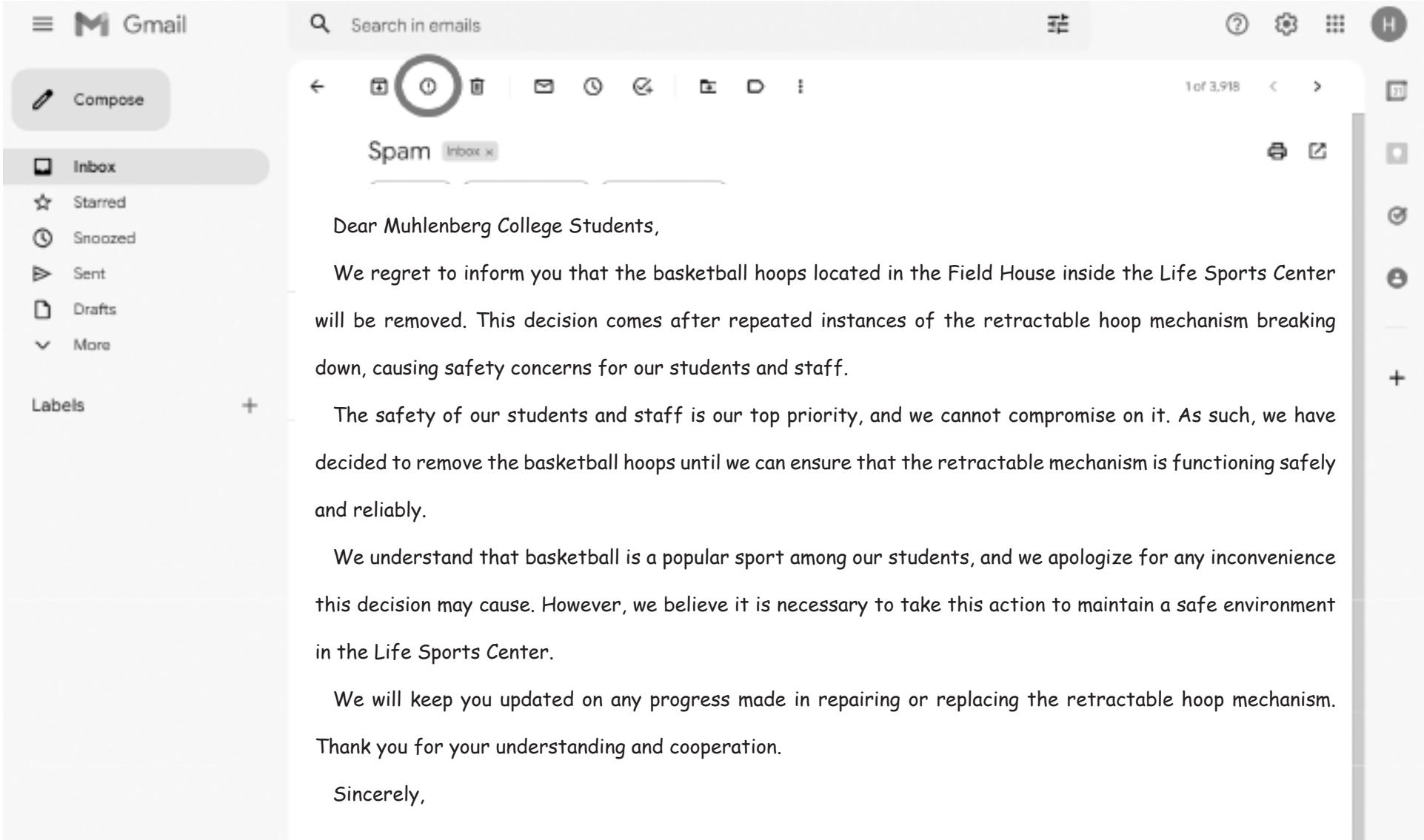
By MATTHEW BAKER-GRUNZA  
HOST OF THE DAILY SHOW

With the recent housing changes, drinking games and co. have seen a significant drop in their “stock prices.” The classic games of the rhombus, beer pong, rage cage and ATO’s favorite tabasco run are in their dying days as a result of the changes to the housing policy. Many of these games require athletic talent, concentration and bank account-draining amounts of funding. The perfect qualities for our beloved athletic department to step in. Starting alongside the new recruiting class of women’s wrestling, the best beer pong players have begun to be recruited from the King of Prussia area. On top of that, recent graduates Max Weiner ‘22 and Joel Hark ‘22 stated in a joint press release, “Yes we

loved academics at Muhlenberg but we feel we’d be wasting our potential if we didn’t pass down our shotgun wisdom.” The only issue with this incredible plan is that a select few athletes will be dropping their sport for the co-ed pong team, the teams losing athletes include men’s golf, women’s cheer, men’s and women’s lacrosse, women’s softball, men’s and women’s soccer... okay not a few... all of the teams. As for the non-athletes “We have been training our artists for this day for many years, from Village parties to our new kegstand facility Studio 22. The theater kids are ready to trade in their Hydroflasks with political stickers for a Gatorade bottle and backpack,” said Theatre Professor Emeritus Charlie Richter. Considering the elite underage alcoholics of Muhlenberg are in peak condition after the St. Paddy’s Day Borglympics, the program will be entering DI against the University of Alabama. “We can’t wait to start recruiting more students, and this new sport will be huge for our enrollment,” says one administrator.



## The scoop on the hoops



By ISAAC SHULMAN  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

On Wednesday Mar. 29, 2023, the Muhlenberg College Administration announced a massive change taking place for the remainder of the 2022-2023 academic school year (read above).

The Field House has always been a place where students will go to hangout, exercise and play basketball. This decision has caused uproar around campus. One event that many students look forward to in the spring semester is the intramural basketball league. This league is composed of Muhlenberg student athletes, members of fraternities and friends.

Birchard Allen ‘26, a member of The Frosh intramural basketball team is concerned that “this decision will ruin intramural basketball.” Ethan Loevy ‘24, a star player on the AEPi team is taking this news very seriously. “What will I do for fun now... I am seriously considering transferring due to the gravity of this decision.”

Not everyone is opposed to the removal of the basketball hoops. Avi Pullin ‘25, who is involved in a capella, thinks “the choice to get rid of the hoops in the field house will help the student body because the administration knows that the students don’t know what they want. They know what’s best for us and we should all just trust them more.”



# The annoying classmate explains March Madness

By MATTHEW BAKER-GRUNZA  
HOST OF THE DAILY SHOW

The underqualified editors of The Muhlenberg Weekly sports section were desperately confused. They needed to explain how March Madness works but they couldn't find any information due to the Wi-Fi shutdown.

So we put boots on the ground in search for quotes from "the classmate who will not shut up."

Right off the bat that annoying classmate of yours who sits in the front row starts talking, "It's your favorite academic weapon here to talk to you about March Madness! Now, I know what you're thinking, isn't March supposed to be all about spring break and sunshine? Well, yeah, but it's also about college basketball!"

Oh wow... insightful... please keep talking.

"So here's the deal: every year in March, there's this big ol' tournament called March Madness. It's like, it's likeeeeeee Fortnite! But with basketballs instead of guns. Isn't that funny!"

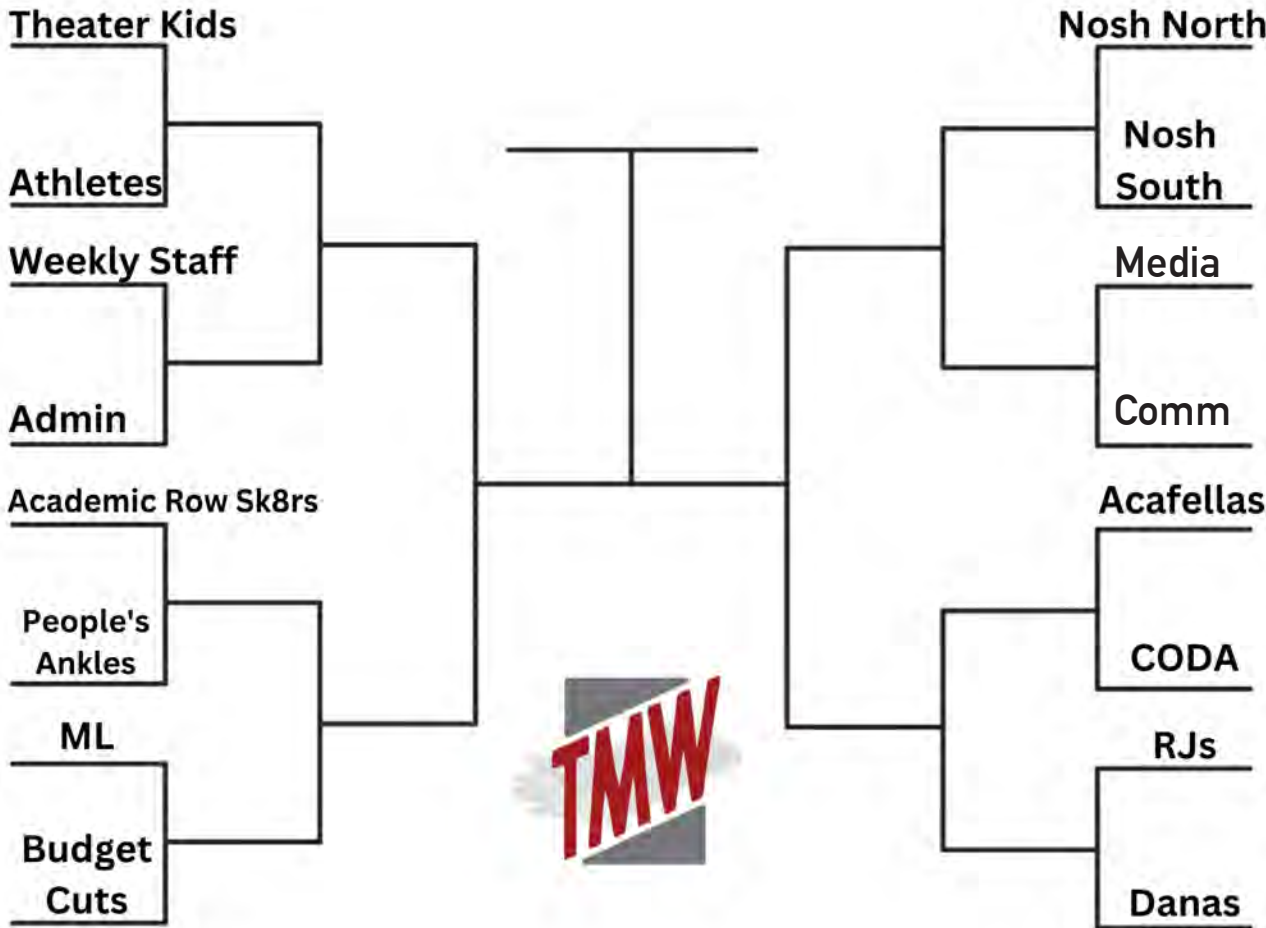
At this point, the editors tried to get out of the conversation like Joe Biden out of Afghanistan, but that annoying classmate, pulled out a classic Trump line as The Weekly tried to leave, "where's my hug?"

Trapped in a hug all three sports editors listened to the twenty-year-old version of James Corden, who's in your Intro to Sociology class, dig in deep with a pitch for the big dance saying, "Now, here's the thing: March Madness is known for being unpredictable. There are always upsets—when a lower-ranked team beats a higher-ranked team—and nobody knows who's going to win until the very end. It's like a big guessing game, and that's what makes it so much fun."

As we faked an emergency, the group paper member who makes your group chat green droned on saying "Plus, there's all sorts of crazy stuff that happens during March Madness. Like, sometimes a team will hit a buzzer-beater—that's when they make a shot right as the game is ending—and everyone goes wild. And sometimes the games are so close that they go into overtime, and that's even more exciting!"

At that point the editors sprinted away with more information than needed and years taken off of their lives.

PHOTO BY TEACHER AYDEN LEVINE '35



## New Player Alert



Russell Westbrook has been relegated to Muhlenberg. Coach Hopkins says, "He's no Dan Gaines, but he'll at least keep the bench warm."



PHOTO COURTESY BY THE MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT; EDITED BY TEACHER AYDEN LEVINE '35

Coming up this week in  
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The Showdown



Sat, Apr. 1 @ 12:00 a.m.  
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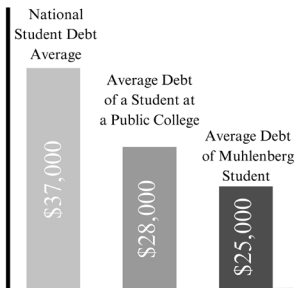
St. Patty's



Whatever date is NOT St. Patty's  
at Sports Alley



## IN THIS ISSUE:



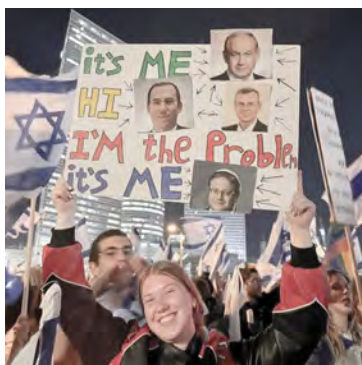
## NEWS

Threats to reverse student debt relief policy.  
**read more on page 3**



## ARTS & CULTURE

"Bare: A Pop Opera" debuts.  
**read more on page 6**



## OP/ED

Dan Harel '26 discusses overseas politics: "Israel's democracy is under attack."  
**read more on page 9**



## SPORTS

Men's lacrosse team returns to the turf.  
**read more on page 11**

# Leading with courage

*"Lessons learned from women of color in leadership."*



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATE RICHMOND, PH.D.

By HARRY GLICKLIN  
LAYOUT EDITOR

As their first panel in recognition of March as International Women's Month, Muhlenberg's women's and gender studies program hosted a discussion "highlighting practical steps women of color and their allies can take in order to cultivate leadership styles that promote inclusion and social justice," as was advertised on the flyer promoting the event.

Robin Riley-Casey, director of the Office of Multicultural Life and associate dean of students and diversity initiatives, began the event by addressing that she and Kate Richmond, Ph.D., professor of psychology and director of women's & gender studies, felt "ashamed" by the initial, unintentional exclusion of Asian and Asian-American women from the panel that was advertised as being comprised of and arranged for women of color. This was first brought to their attention roughly 24 hours before the event, through an email from Irene Chien, Ph.D., assistant professor of media & communication, who had heard these concerns from her students. "This mirrors how often this happens in the real world," said Richmond. On behalf of her students, Chien stated that "this exclusion reinforces to the campus community the historic exclusion of these students as people of color." Riley-Casey closed the beginning remarks by acknowledging that this oversight is calling her to rethink the ways she engages with campus communities, emphasizing that,

"This is an ongoing exercise and conversation."

Moderated by Gabby Morales '23, the panel consisted of Allentown City Councilperson Ce-Ce Gerlach, as well as five Muhlenberg students—Richeta Cubano '24, AnnaMaria Fernandez '24, Shanae Fenton '24, Nevaeh Everett '25 and Regina Lau '23. The participants began by discussing the skills and values that are necessary for being an effective community leader, and whether or not they are specific to women of color. The panelists discussed such values as empathy, collaboration and respect, and how they are related to the experiences of women of color.

Cubano remarked that "The idea of women of color having to be different or work harder is stereotypical. It's engraved into our minds but not needed. We're all the same." Additionally, Fernandez stated that women of color are sometimes asked to act upon these values more explicitly. "Empathy is not unique to women of color, but we have to have empathy and learn to use it as a means of communicating way earlier than other women or people... As women of color, we're forced to use empathy, whereas white people aren't taught that."

Morales proceeded to ask the panel "what made [them] want to create and participate in leading community organizing." Fernandez answered, "Frankly, I was tired of being silenced. I noticed I had to do it for myself or no one else was gonna do it for me." Many speakers built upon the importance of the community in leadership, echoing Fernandez's comment that even as the

one to take charge, change often requires collaboration. Lau and Everett also referenced their involvement in Muhlenberg's Emerging Leaders program. As a predominantly white institution (PWI), multiple panelists agreed with Lau's experience of the "culture shock" of Muhlenberg and the importance of finding a strong community, which for Everett was the Black Students Association (BSA). Cubano also discussed the long-term historical and future impact of her community work, saying "I picked up the baton from the person before me, and when I leave, I pass it on to the next person." Fenton also stated that she wanted to "[create] a space for other people to feel seen and represented."

One of the more vulnerable moments of the talk was prompted by the questioning of the obstacles or challenges the panelists faced as women of color in leadership. Councilperson Gerlach began, stating "The Lehigh Valley is racist as hell. It is racist, classist, homophobic, etc... No matter how many degrees or qualifications you have, you will never be good enough. Most of the people calling the shots around here are white men, so when you walk into that room, they don't want you there."

Fernandez commented that she often feels her contributions become invisible in leadership. Even as the president of her sorority, which she acknowledged is a "very white national organization," Fernandez continued, "[Muhlenberg] is the first to plaster my face everywhere and the first to silence me."

"The school liked to nitpick

what they want from you, but don't want to give you anything," said Everett in agreement. Lau also brought up the difficulty of addressing problems with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), and Cubano expanded this idea by stating that students are unable to reach people in power to make a change. Fernandez touched on this later in the event, stating that "DEI work is most of the time for white people. There are no initiatives for change, just buzz words... Without anti-racist practices, DEI work is tokenism." Everett continued, discussing the stigma of leadership and "holding it together" with the statement "As women of color, we can't cry or express emotions. I always feel like I have to be okay to proceed with what I want to change."

Most panelists agreed that one of the most important things that motivate them is their community and the idea that they are stronger when they come together. The group also added that there needs to be intention behind these collaborations and that being intentionally inclusive rather than simply creating spaces for people goes much further.

Gerlach concluded with her piece of advice for anyone wanting to become a leader: "Get used to being uncomfortable and being okay with it. Those small moments lead to larger moments." The panel encouraged everyone to be leaders and make a change, as well as take care of themselves, with Fenton concluding "In order to be the change you want to see in the world, you also have to just be."



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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The Muhlenberg Weekly strives for accuracy in reporting and writing, but we acknowledge that mistakes happen. Readers are invited to submit corrections about errors in articles, and they should be submitted to weeklyeditor@gmail.com. Corrections are also brought to our staff's attention by our own editors and writers. Our staff will review the suggested correction, consult with the author of the article, and issue the appropriate correction. Online corrections are located at the bottom of the article. Print corrections are located within the paper, on the page indicated in the online edition. However, The Weekly does not grant take-down requests for articles.

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We request that advertising material be submitted by the Monday preceding publication at 5 p.m. If materials have not been received at that time, the advertisement will not run and the advertiser is still responsible for 100% payment. We reserve the right to decline any advertisement that is misleading, inaccurate, fraudulent, or deemed generally unacceptable. This determination will be made by the Business Staff in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief. The Muhlenberg Weekly maintains a distinction between its news & editorial content and advertising. As such, advertisements will not be accepted if they imitate the general style of The Weekly, intentionally or unintentionally. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: headlines, bylines, fonts, and column-arrangements. In order to make this distinction, The Weekly also reserves the right to include the word "advertisement" on any advertisement that is deemed too native.

# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

**3/20/23**

**Theft**—Report of theft of speaker in the LSC, no suspects at this time  
**Property**—Report of found iPad in the library, owner later claimed item

**3/22/23**

**Animal**—Report of bat in residence in MILE house, Campus Safety Officer removed bat  
**Medical**—Report of sick student in Taylor, MC EMS responded, AEMS responded and transported student to the hospital  
**Medical**—Report of sick student in Brown, MC EMS responded, AEMS responded and transported student to the hospital

**3/24/23**

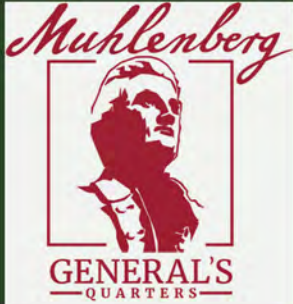
**Harassment**—Report of harassment in Mile House, individual spoken to, investigation to continue

**3/25/23**

**Medical**—Report of sick student on N. 23rd St., MC EMS responded, AEMS responded and transported student to the hospital



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# Supreme Court case threatens to reverse Biden's student debt relief policy

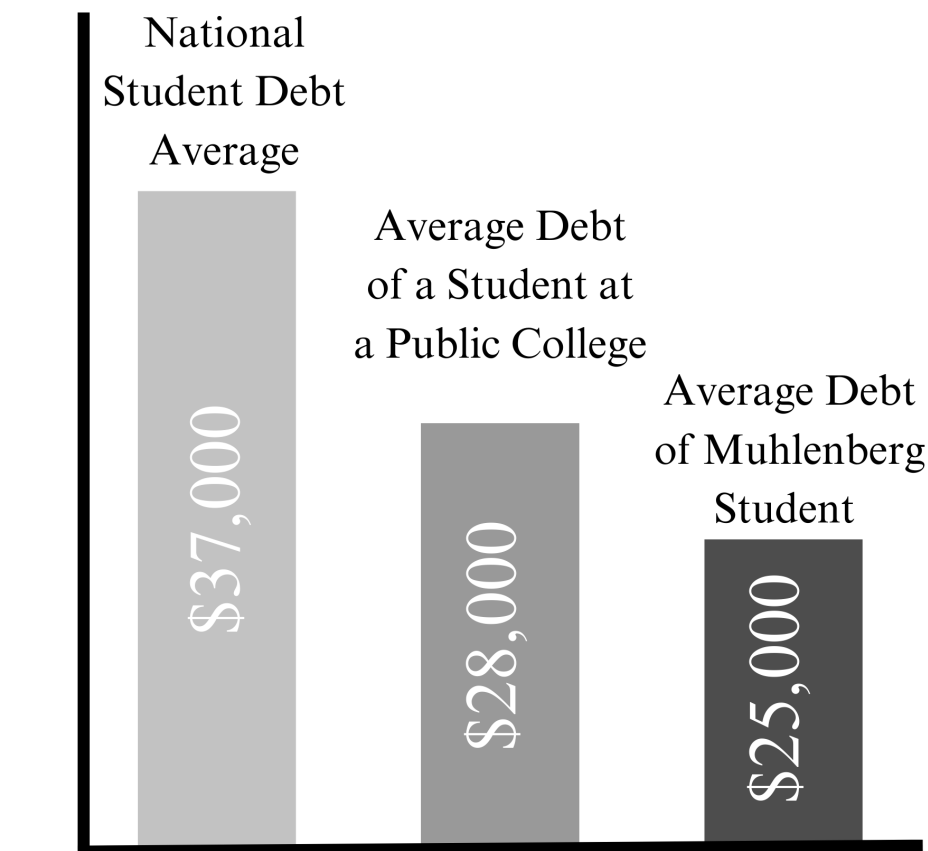
BY KATHERINE CONLON  
MANAGING EDITOR

GRAPH BY PHOTO EDITOR AYDEN LEVINE '23

On Feb. 28, The Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) heard arguments for *Biden v. Nebraska*. The decision for this case has the ability to uproot President Biden's federal student loan relief plan. Under the Biden administration's program, individuals who make less than \$125,000 per year are eligible for up to \$20,000 in debt relief if they are a Pell Grant recipient or \$10,000 in debt relief if they are not. If the justices rule in Nebraska's favor, Biden's program would be deemed unconstitutional and would not be put into effect.

Those that listened to the oral arguments may have noticed that the plaintiff's primary reasoning was not what was expected, according to Assistant Professor of Political Science Ross Dardani, Ph.D. Dardani noted that "this case is definitely part of much broader trends that most people aren't paying attention to that are also really important." The trends alluded to by Dardani involve a concept known as standing. Standing refers to whether or not a person or entity can demonstrate significant harm has been done to them that would elicit legal action. The states— including Nebraska, Missouri, Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas and South Carolina— that have sued the Biden administration are arguing that the program violates separation of powers because it was done without congressional approval and was the result of an executive action. The Biden administration justified the program using the HEROES Act, a law passed to provide emergency relief during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Historically, the Court would not have accepted a case such as this because the barrier for standing was much higher. Dardani stated that "what's been happening in recent years with the Roberts



Court, is that they've been more sympathetic to lowering the barriers to standing for these types of cases that involve attorneys generals of states who are attempting to challenge federal laws." This is part of a broader, decades-long conservative legal movement to dismantle the administrative state and the practice of deferring to independent regulatory agencies.

President Kathleen Harring, Ph.D., described the student body's current relationship with debt saying, "Muhlenberg graduates average approximately \$25,000 in federal student loan debt, which is lower than the national average of more than \$37,000 and lower than the \$28,000 average debt of students attending public institutions. Our alumni are getting

jobs that set them up for success to make these payments and launch meaningful careers. The most recent federal student loan default rate for Muhlenberg alumni was 1.5 percent—also significantly lower than the national average."

Director of Financial Aid and Associate Dean of Admissions Greg Mitton explained how Muhlenberg consults with students about their federal financial aid saying, "Before a student can take a federal loan they are required by federal mandate to complete a process called Entrance Counseling. This exercise introduces students to their rights and responsibilities regarding the Federal Student Loan program. This process is repeated at the time of graduation. This is called Exit

Counseling. In this process students will learn that their Federal Loan Servicer is a vital component to loan repayment experience and the many options they have in terms of payment plans."

Mitton continued noting, "In addition to their loan servicer, the Office of Financial Aid is always available to answer any questions students and alumni may have during or following their Muhlenberg experience. My staff and myself will spend countless hours in individual counseling sessions to help students make the best choice possible regarding the use of a Federal Student Loan."

Harring added information about the College's connection to the Pell Grant program, which is a federally funded program that provides need-based aid for undergraduates. "As a member of NAICU (National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities), Muhlenberg supports the organization's efforts to lobby Congress to continue to increase and eventually double the Pell Grant maximum from \$6,495 to \$13,000... Pell Grant recipients continue to have more student-loan debt than their peers; they are twice as likely to have student loans than non-Pell-eligible students. Doubling the Pell Grant is one of the most effective ways that Congress can improve access to higher education and reduce its cost," stated Harring.

So, the lingering question is: will I get my money? The likely answer is, no. It was reported that the Court's conservative majority seemed unsympathetic to the defense's argument. As of Apr. 3, an appeals court unpaused the student debt forgiveness process. So, currently, individuals can apply for relief. Whether or not the Supreme Court will deem the program constitutional will not be known until the summer. However, it is looking like the conservative supermajority will rule in favor of the plaintiffs.

## Brown lecture hosts Koestenbaum's "Splash Guards"

BY AMY SWARTZ  
STAFF WRITER

On Thursday, Apr. 23, Wayne Koestenbaum came to Muhlenberg College to read his recent essay for the John D. M. Brown Lecture. The essay is titled "Splash Guards," a theme that loosely ties in all of his thoughts and dreams that he discusses in his essay.

Koestenbaum is a highly decorated poet, critic, novelist, artist and performer that has made a dramatic impact on the contemporary writing community. He graduated from Harvard University with a B.A., Johns Hopkins University with an M.A. and earned a Ph.D. from Princeton University. He has published nineteen

books, including "Camp Marmalade" and "The Pink Trance Notebooks." Koestenbaum has published numerous essays and poems, released records of his vocal and piano performances and created paintings that have debuted in countless shows. Currently, he is a professor of English, French and comparative literature at CUNY Graduate Center in New York City.

Koestenbaum began his lecture by telling the audience he started the essay in 2019, wrote about his dreams over a series of weeks and months and then put it down until recently. He often wrote in the early mornings about his dreams from the night before. Though the thoughts, feelings and experiences he details through-

out the essay are not exclusively dreams, the supernatural feeling bleeds through his words.

Though mystical, Koestenbaum chooses an intriguing way of keeping a sense of order to his essay. Instead of dividing his essay into typical paragraphs, he numbers each section, with each section containing a different thought or dream. When he was asked why he chose to number the paragraphs, he simply shared that's how he knows how to write. He likes the symbolic unity, while it also gives him a "more poetic form of prose," in his words. Not only does he bend the rules of a conventional essay by numbering each paragraph, but the way he organizes his thoughts, and the thoughts themselves,

have been deemed unconventional.

Koestenbaum's essay is provocative, giving the audience an intimate understanding of him, his dreams and his innermost thoughts. The themes that he puts an emphasis on include loneliness, endings, love and desire. His muse also cannot be pinpointed and given one source, as he details how people, death, films, novels and love, have all given him inspiration. However, generalizing Koestenbaum's essay into a handful of subjects doesn't fully encapsulate the variation in his essay, where he shares intimate details about his life with his audience.

Sonny Berenson '26 elaborated on the

SEE BROWN PAGE 4



# Celebrating healthy sexuality at Muhlenberg through women's history month event

BY BECCA BAITEL  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

On Feb. 28, The Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) heard arguments for Biden v. Nebraska. The decision for this case has the ability to uproot President Biden's federal student loan relief plan. Under the Biden administration's program, individuals who make less than \$125,000 per year are eligible for up to \$20,000 in debt relief if they are a Pell Grant recipient or \$10,000 in debt relief if they are not. If the justices rule in Nebraska's favor, Biden's program would be deemed unconstitutional and would not be put into effect.

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## FROM BROWN PAGE 3

significance of the individual stories that Koestenbaum details, saying, "I find it particularly funny and clever that Koestenbaum is able to tell such profound stories and lessons amidst discussions of sex, humor and typically inappropriate and illicit material. Although some of Koestenbaum's stories are seemingly silly and immature, he manages to reveal the profound within average life, as well as find ways in which we can turn the mundane into genius." This transformation of life that he details throughout the entirety of his work is what makes his essay so compelling. He skips from story to story, keeping the audience compelled and constantly wanting more.

Megan Hansen '26 shared, "I thought that the talk was really refreshing because he was willing to get personal and introspective with essentially a group of strangers. His open talking about his own intrusive thoughts on desire and humanity kind of created a normalcy and comfort for the similar thoughts that others might have, and suddenly the crowd became less like 'strangers' and more like a group of people with common thoughts."

Most of the stories detailed in Koestenbaum's essay do not have conclusions. They come to abrupt endings and are never mentioned again. Desire is pervasive throughout, as he discusses his desire to create, to be with others and to exist. This

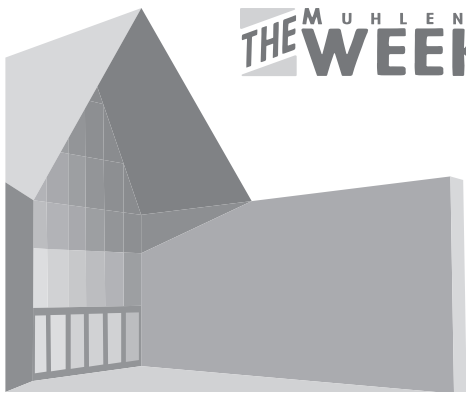
transcends into his broader goals, and when asked about them, Koestenbaum said that "desire is really complicated. What you love and care about erotically and otherwise is really complicated."

Though desire is his conceptual goal, he also expressed individual goals and ideas for writing, stating "the least cookie cutter writing will bring the best chance of finding personal solace." He also finds great importance in listening to others speak about their writing, specifically provocative writing, as it allows for people to find others to relate and connect with. These connections include topics that seem in the "realm of the unmentionable, giving language to that stuff is a salvage operation."

PHOTO BY EBRU YILDIZ







"The path to your success is not as fixed and inflexible as you think."

- Misty Copeland

# In Motion 2023 gets the dance department up and "in motion"



PHOTO BY MARCO CALDERON

BY ALMARAH URMAN  
VISITING LAYOUT EDITOR

On Mar. 30 through Apr. 1, the Muhlenberg dance department staged its 2023 rendition of "In Motion." The dance performance featured seven pieces, six choreographed by Muhlenberg dance faculty and one by visiting guest artist Melanie George. For the first time ever in a faculty-led dance production, the choreographers were all non-male identifying.

"I feel like this year's production of 'In Motion' is really changing the expectations of dance shows going forward. The dance department did an amazing job of putting on a show that breaks the standards and expectations of what dance can mean and look like. "In Motion" in its entirety was cohesive and powerful," remarked dancer Lily Knowles '23.

The pieces varied enormously in style and theme, and all of them were captivating in their own unique ways. "In Motion" has been in rehearsal since last semester, so finally getting the pieces on stage in front of an audience was rewarding for everyone involved.

"I'm very happy that so many people ended up coming up to me and saying how great it was. It made the two semesters of work on it worth it. It's been my entire experience at Muhlenberg. I came here two weeks into school, we auditioned for it and started work right away. Now I'm sad that it's over," reflected Emma Forster, '26.

Each choreographer had a vastly different approach to their pieces. Some of them were very collaborative in their choreography, with dancers sharing that larger portions of what they came up with themselves ended up in the final piece,

while others had their own vision that the dancers executed. However, one thing that remained true across the pieces was the clarity with which the truth of the style's history and the choreographer's perspective were reflected.

Choreographer of "In Motion"'s tap piece and the production's co-artistic director, Robyn Watson, reflected, "One of my favorite parts of creating my piece was the chair dance. One thing you should know is that every member of my cast learns everything, even if they may not perform that particular section. I loved creating the chair dance because it goes from a 4/4 time signature to a 5/4 time signature, and it references the historical roots of tap dance." Audience member Zachary Huseman '26 said, "Something I really enjoyed about the tap dance was when they brought out the chairs. The piece was about grief, and tap is usually such a physical dance that utilizes your entire body, but in the chair, they were really only engaged from the knees down, and I thought that was a really interesting reflection of the concepts that the dance was based on. They're chair tapping not because they're physically hurt, but because they're metaphysically hurt—they're grieving."

"5/4 [time signature] feels really destabilizing, it doesn't move the way you expect it to move, and the next bar comes when you aren't really ready for it. It feels like it really ties into the metaphor of grief and how interrupting it feels; you aren't ready to lose something," reflected Anna Item, '25.

"For me, the most meaningful part of dancing in 'In Motion' was the trust that formed between me, my castmates and Robyn (our choreographer). In 'The Flesh of Grief,' we tackled the complexi-

ties of grief in a very deep and significant way. Knowing that we could all trust one another to work with this theme in a respectful and safe environment allowed me to explore my own relationship with grief, which in turn has impacted many other parts of my life," said dancer Marissa Cohen '25.

As a guest artist, George's job was to bring something to "In Motion" that none of the faculty could bring. "For me, it was about giving them an experience with my particular approach to jazz dance, which is rooted in a Black American approach, because jazz is a rooted Black American art form," George told the department for the website. One of the goals of the co-artistic directors of "In Motion," Heidi Cruz-Austin and Watson, was to find someone who was dedicated to anti-racist practices and would introduce something new to the show. This sentiment was honored in "This Thing Called Jazz", which utilized four distinct jazz dance styles.

When asked what his favorite part of working with George was, dancer Matthew McCray, '24 replied, "Being able to come into a rehearsal space, where I felt free, heard, seen and appreciated. There was a meaning behind every movement, there was a purpose behind every beat."

"Melanie George came with a clear vision of how jazz is, both in practice and historically, embodied; she executed it beautifully," said Knowles.

All of the pieces were unique and each stood out in their own right, but like any creative piece, everybody, audience, choreographer and dancer alike, had their own personal favorites to watch.

"Heidi Cruz-Austin's piece, 'Wavelength,' is an epic piece of work and probably my favorite work this year. Heidi is a master at challenging dance forms and

presenting life narratives with her work and creating masterpieces. 'Wavelength' speaks about the ebb and flows of life while challenging what ballet is, [is] pure genius," said Watson.

"I loved the use of space in the second piece ["An Appeasement," choreographed by Natalie Gotter & Dancers]. I thought the sort of motif of confinement or close quarters represented first through the curtain and later through the lighting was really well done," said audience member Mattea Pappa '26.

"I loved the entire performance, it was so amazing to see such a wide variety of dances that were all engaging in their own way! The contrasts between two dances that were in the same style were especially interesting. The two ballet pieces, for example, were both very different but I loved them both for different reasons. I was really engaged in the show and left feeling very inspired!" said Annalise Christie '26.

"I have to say that 'Channels,' Anito Gavino's jazz piece, was outstanding. Anito's use of sound and lighting, combined with the talent and passion of the performers, created a moving piece that told a clear story about the immigrant experience in the United States. Considering the status of Muhlenberg as a [Primarily White Institution], I think it's an important story to tell at this school, and it was refreshing to see jazz dance represented on stage (in not one, but two different pieces)," reflected Cohen.

"In Motion" was a reflection of tremendous amounts of hard work by everyone involved. It represented multiple stories, cultures and histories all while working to make the Muhlenberg dance department a more progressive and inclusive space for artistry.



# "Bare: A Pop Opera"

BY DANNY MILKIS  
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

*Disclaimer: The author of this piece was involved with this production.*

Friday Mar. 31 and Saturday Apr. 1, the Seegers Union Event Space hosted the live performances of "Bare: A Pop Opera," a full-length sung-through musical theatre piece produced by Jake Hoffman '23 and directed and music directed by Abby Schechter '24, with assistant musical direction by Lily Arovos '23 and stage management by Emma Walter '25.

"Bare," a contemporary pop-rock musical with a book by Damon Intrabartolo and Jon Hartmere, Jr., music by Intrabartolo and lyrics by Hartmere, is centered around the lives of several students at a Catholic boarding school, as they come to terms with ideas of sexuality, personal identity and the impending future.

"It was definitely a crazy busy process, but it was so informative, educational and so much fun," explained Schechter. "I think I learned a lot about myself as a director and also communication and how to schedule with people. I also was able to really dive into this story. It is one that means so much to me, and being able to share that with people is something that is one of the things that drew me to the show initially."

The show featured high-quality instrumental tracks, as well as a full lighting and



"Bare: A Pop Opera" takes the stage in concert form.

sound element thanks to the help of lighting designers Jonah Adamcik, assistant director of Seegers Union and the student experience and Ben Goldstone '24, both with 'Berg Production.

To Hoffman, who took on the responsibility of securing the rights to the show, as well as bringing many of the administrative aspects of the show together prior to the rehearsal process, performing "Bare" at Muhlenberg has been a years-long dream come to fruition. Hoffman also served as the lead in the show.

"The most rewarding part of the producing experience is the ability to look at the final product and be able to say "we

did that." To be able to watch an idea flourish and evolve into its final product shows a testament to the power of creative thinking and problem-solving. Despite setbacks and unforeseen circumstances, we were able to put on a show. If nothing else, it was able to happen and provide an experience for so many students, in the cast, production team, creative team, tech team and audience," explained Hoffman.

"This show and this process were nothing short of incredible," said Charlotte Alexander '25, a cast member. "This story is one that is so deep and so special to all of us, and the whole show weekend was

magical thanks to everyone involved."

The rehearsal process was completely student-run and student-curated through-and-through, and the production team took on the responsibility of overseeing this project from its beginnings all the way to a final product. Naturally, such an undertaking was met with numerous challenges, but the team was prepared to take on whatever came their way.

"The biggest challenge was trying to anticipate everything that could go wrong and trying to get ahead of those potential issues," detailed Hoffman. "Obviously, no one can foresee the future, but we did our best to plan for all possibilities. We had backup plans for spaces, lighting, costumes, casting, funding and anything else under the sun. As a consequence, though, the production team was constantly trying to balance the reality of what was happening currently in the production in the present, as well as with the future of the process."

"I hope every audience member went home and told their loved ones how much they love them," said Schechter. "And I hope that it was an enjoyable way to kind of give some thought to the things that are important in life. And really just taking care of each other, and I hope that the audience is able to reflect in a way that is beneficial."

## In the mind of Kevin Tuttle

BY SHINAM HUSSAIN  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

On Monday, Mar. 20 Muhlenberg's Martin Art Gallery presented an exhibition titled "Bifurcated Mind," which displayed the drawings and sculptures of Senior Lecturer Kevin Tuttle. The exhibition displays drawings throughout the walls of the gallery, and there is a sculpture standing at the entrance.

On Wednesday Mar. 22 there was an opening reception, where the artwork was first revealed and observers were able to view Tuttle's exhibition. Then, on Wednesday, Mar. 29, there was a gallery talk that allowed for Tuttle to explain the meaning behind his art, his inspirations and answer any questions from the audience in regards to his work.

Tuttle began the gallery talk with a presentation about the many artworks and artists that inspired his own craft. He showed a variety of artists and work that he drew inspiration from, including pieces of art he didn't necessarily enjoy. Throughout the presentation, Tuttle spoke intensively about each piece that enlightened him, mentioning the color schemes, the forms, the content and how they all gave him a basis to work off of for his own art.

When examining a painting of fruit that he said inspired his own work, Tuttle said, "The colors used for this was something that drew my attention, and the fact that it is just a simple painting but, cap-

turing."

Tuttle spoke so passionately and intently about his inspirations, he interrupted himself to make sure his audience was able to follow the dive into his mind as he asked "Am I making sense?"

Throughout the talk, Tuttle expressed clearly that much of his art was a reflection of his mind and how his art was able to speak for him. He stated, "I was trying to find something to talk about for me. To have something to talk to because I wasn't heard."

"What's in my mind? What's in my head? Figuring this out was a big part of why I became an artist."

Tuttle took the audience through his long process of becoming an artist, informing everyone that he grew up with aspirations to study oceanography. Tuttle said, "I went to college to study oceanography. I wanted to be a scientist my whole life."

He then spoke to the audience about how during his time in school, someone came across his drawings and advised him to take an art class. It was in this class that he realized how important art was to express his thoughts. "I was looking for someone to tell me this is what I should do. I didn't care about talent, I wanted to find out what was in my mind."

Tuttle's work in the exhibition, as stated in the title, is what is in his mind. Tuttle spoke about how art has served as an outlet for his thoughts. He repeatedly spoke to the importance of his work be-

ing able to capture his feelings, even if he didn't know what they were yet. His art spoke for his thoughts and feelings, and allowed him to make sense of emotions he wasn't completely conscious of.

Tuttle vocalized, "In school, I was trying to figure out, and ask 'What was in my mind?' A lot of it [the artwork] was dark."

Jessica Ambler, the director of the Martin Art Gallery spoke to The Weekly about Tuttle's talent, and why she desired to display his art. Ambler stated, "Tuttle is not only a senior lecturer here at Muhlenberg in the Art Department but he is also a practicing artist himself. I think that holding an exhibition of his past and current work provides a wonderful opportunity for Tuttle's students to be able to see what their instructor is working on and to hear about his practice."

Ambler continued by expressing how unique the exhibition was because of how focused Tuttle's artwork was on allowing the audience to understand what is inside

of his head, his mind and his thoughts, saying, "I think that one of the unique aspects of 'Bifurcated Mind' is that it allows visitors to take a peek into the mind of the artist. The exhibition is essentially split between two distinct parts of Tuttle's practice: abstract grids and representational still-lives. While these two genres are very different at first glance, there are numerous overlaps and common threads. I hope that viewers are able to stand in front of a work in the gallery and connect it visually with other works in the exhibition. I think that by contemplating the multivalent connections between all the works in the exhibition, viewers can better understand the artist's process."

Audience member Anna Hanley '25 gave her thoughts on the exhibition, stating "It was cool to see his progression as an artist, and all the different inspirations he had. It was so insightful to see how that inspiration bleeds into his own work."

PHOTO BY ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR SAM COHEN '26





# Artist spotlight: Rachel Gesner '24

BY DANNY MILKIS  
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

Recently, Rachel Gesner '24 produced and released a brand new original song called "Own Worst Enemy," which allows the listener to step into the shoes of someone who struggles with the daily effects of various mental health conditions.

Gesner, who has been an aspiring songwriter and musician since the age of thirteen, started learning how to play piano chords and accompany her vocals instrumentally. She was interested in crafting a narrative through music that resonates with listeners in a broad sense.

"I kind of wanted someone to hear this song and be like, 'Oh, my God, I totally relate to that,' or 'I experienced that, I know what she's talking about.' I really wanted it to connect, and strike a chord deep within their hearts," said Gesner. "I know that mental health is different for everyone, but the concept is basically just that the little voice in your head that gets in the way makes you have doubt in yourself. A lot of that, for me, comes from the fact that I second guess myself a lot. I'm an anxious person, which started when I was younger, and as I've grown up, it's definitely been more challenging, but I've found ways to make it more manageable in learning what it is and how to deal with it."

Gesner has a solidified process when it comes to songwriting, which begins with the lyrics, then transitions to the creation of a chordal skeleton for the song on the piano, finding how to best set the text of the song to a meaningful rhythm.

"I've always been more of a lyricist," continued Gesner. "I definitely think I just express my emotions in lyrics. I think that there's been times during my day where if I'm really upset about something, or really stressed about something, it won't really be settled until I write it down into lyrics. And obviously, it doesn't fix it. But for me, it's very therapeutic. Because I feel like people really underestimate the ability of music and writing and how it's just so therapeutic, because it allows you to express your emotions in ways that you wouldn't be able to express in just words."

She then works with a producer, and the two talk through the specific feelings and messaging Gesner is looking to evoke through the song, and figure out the logistics through which to achieve that tone and mood musically.

"I would almost say this one ["Own Worst Enemy"] is a little bit of pop rock because it's pop but it also has a little bit of the bass instead of the acoustic guitar. I think I've written songs with more piano, and this one is less on the piano side and more on the rock and [electric] strings side."

PHOTO COURTESY OF RACHEL GESNER '24



Gesner explains that one of the biggest challenges for songwriters in the 2020s is the influx of TikTok and short-form video content outlets within social media. While this has allowed emerging songwriters easier access to a platform than ever before, this visibility has subsequently created increased artistic competition within the industry.

"Everyone is constantly trying to work in the industry that I'm trying to work in, but I really want to try to pursue this as much as I can, in terms of being able to write more songs, experiment with more

genres, and just not be afraid to really put myself out there," concluded Gesner. "As scary as it is, I think I really want to be able to take my emotions, even if it's not about mental health, or if it is about mental health, whatever it is, I really want to be able to... really put myself out there and turn my ideas into songs. I would love for my music to connect to larger amounts of people."

Writers at Muhlenberg and the Center for Ethics Present:



## Mohsin Hamid

### Lecture and Book Signing

Tuesday, April 11, 2023 | 7 p.m.  
Moyer Hall, Miller Forum

Books will be available for cash or credit sales.

#### ABOUT MOHSIN HAMID

**Mohsin Hamid** was born in 1971 in Lahore. He grew up mostly in Pakistan but spent part of his childhood in California and returned to America to attend Princeton University and Harvard Law School. He then worked in New York and London as a management consultant before returning to Lahore to pursue writing full time. Since then he has published *Moth Smoke* (2000), *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007), *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013), *Exit West* (2017) and *The Last White Man* (2022). Hamid's essays have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Review of Books*, the *Financial Times* and many other publications. A book collection of his nonfiction writing, *Discontent and Its Civilizations: Dispatches from Lahore, New York and London*, was published in 2015. His writing has been translated into 40 languages, adapted into a movie, made bestseller lists and won numerous prizes. He has lectured at dozens of universities around the world and was named one of the world's 100 Leading Global Thinkers by *Foreign Policy* magazine.

Free and open to the public

**Muhlenberg College**

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# 10 things I learned at my first journalism conference

By ALEX CABAN-ECHEVARRIA  
STAFF WRITER

As a current ProPublica Emerging Reporter, I am participating in a year-long fellowship for journalists of color in college. As I am not majoring in journalism like many other students in this program, I was nervous about attending the National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting (NICAR) Conference this year. I traveled to Nashville, TN from Mar. 1-5 for this conference and I went in with an open mind. I was looking forward to this opportunity to connect with journalists from around the country, and to gain more industry perspectives as I decide where to attend journalism school after graduating this May.

Going into the conference, ProPublica prepared the fellows with tips to succeed and how to network. I wrote everything down and attended as many sessions as I could, so I can share what I learned with my journalism community: The Muhlenberg Weekly.

**1. Be interested in everything, read as much as possible, and save it all for later.**

This applied to the conference in general, but also as I left Nashville and came back to my current work. During the conference, I attended panels that may not have been in my particular field but sounded interesting, like “How to investigate pay

inequities at your workplace” or “QAnon in Europe: Tracing a viral conspiracy through social media.” Once I got home, I read a book I picked up at the conference called “Homelessness is a Housing Problem” by Gregg Colburn and took notes on how it will affect my reporting for the Allentown Voice. I plan to share these findings with my editor and use it to further propel my work on the affordable housing crisis in journalism school (j-school).

**2. When networking, have a goal in mind for the conversation.**

Ask questions, take notes and research who you are talking to beforehand, so you can know their work. It is important to make meaningful connections, not quantify these experiences.

**3. Talk to people around you.**

ProPublica told us to set a goal of meeting at least five people. For me, this included the professors I reached out to at one j-school and had coffee with, two students I met at the reception for first-timers, and a journalist I went up to after her panel and asked to talk about her work in the future.

**4. Lean into being a student (and in my case, a student of color).**

While at a lunch with journalists at ProPublica, I talked about the schools I’ve applied to and got into, and was asked about my current work, my graduation and what I’ve liked at the conference so far. I also asked these professionals where they

started in the industry and if they had any advice for us as students.

**5. Follow up with everyone you meet.** Send emails saying thank you, schedule those meetings in the future, or introduce yourself officially if you didn’t talk to them in person, but listened to them speak on an interesting panel.

**6. Data journalism isn’t as intimidating as it looks.**

Although I didn’t learn how to use R-Studio this weekend, I learned valuable tips and tricks from data journalists that apply to every story—like backing up your work (making incremental backups and two copies, or as many as possible).

**7. Log everything.**

Keep a detailed log of every task completed in every story, including who you contacted, when, and whether you got a reply. One demo showed that Notion can do this, but other recommended software include Airtable and Obsidian.

**8. Google Sheets is your friend.**

In dealing with data, you don’t have to learn how to code, but you can utilize a wide variety of features that are available. While at a training session about higher education data, I learned how to use Google Sheets to clean up data, make filters and use numbers to code categories.

**9. Numbers are poison in audio.**

The best way to convey statistics is by having someone else explain it, or by using your voice to repeat, emphasize and

convey surprising information. Do the math for your listener, illustrate the concept with comparisons, and trust the listener to trust your reporting.

**10. There are stories lying in the data—you just have to find them.**

While at a session about using public data to uncover the hidden costs of the housing crisis, Juan Pablo Garnham of the Eviction Lab said that “The story is waiting to be found.” By digging through public records, such as those available through the Eviction Lab, there is potential for localization and replication of national stories in your own community.

Attending my first journalism conference was rewarding, as I saw up close how small the data journalism community is. I learned to talk to everyone around me—even on the plane, where I met a data reporter for Spotlight PA—and spent valuable time with the other seven fellows talking about our own work, college life and post-graduation plans. These connections will stay with me throughout my career. I hope that by sharing these tips, it will inspire readers to become writers, writers to become reporters, and reporters to become professional journalists. If you have any interest in talking more about NICAR and/or anything else my email is [acaban-echevarria@muhlenberg.edu](mailto:acaban-echevarria@muhlenberg.edu) and I’d be happy to hear from you!



## Listen Loudly

...

A creative space for marginalized voices



# Mother

By GRACE ALVARADO  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

A facade, a rat trap that snapped my neck. I was pacified by cul-de-sac love, bringing me back to mother’s arms. In her version, she hugged too tightly, hence the *crack*.

Clamping claws against my wrist. Grinding hard into skin. She slapped a firm hand over a jar. My firefly brain trapped like an experiment.

Jars of Spanish seasoning resting in our fridge. How could I not think it’s love when it kisses me every night and makes home cooked meals?

Little siblings walked into my room to ask questions via her. A mouthpiece for mother, Turning them into spies for answers. Tears hit my bare knees, delicate as velvety dog fur.

I couldn’t help it, becoming the dog begging at my mother’s feet. Well behaved, excelling in obedience classes. Racing after fake throws, not wanting to believe.

My eyes lifted to see her saccharine smile flashing back at me. All she wanted was to be the best in her children’s eyes, so how could I really despise that?

Firefly. Dog. Rat. Morphing to *crack* the code of love. Constantly circling back to confusion. At seven years old, I loved bald eagles. Beautiful. Free.

Flapping wings until the forests no longer look like barbed wire.

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor ([bergweeklyoped@gmail.com](mailto:bergweeklyoped@gmail.com)) or the Editor-in-Chief ([weeklyeditor@gmail.com](mailto:weeklyeditor@gmail.com)) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.





# everything is done

BY KATHERINE CONLON  
MANAGING EDITOR

i have the wherewithal to breathe by myself  
my lungs work on their own  
i have a tenderness to my skin,  
a firmness to my feet,  
a heart young enough to learn but old enough to remember  
“i wanna be happy, i’m ready to walk into my room without looking for you” plays on the highway  
i pass a billboard for a baby that was just born  
recalling a laurel canyon know-it-all, desperate for the answers  
belonging to an ocean of aspiring philosophers  
they pine for enlightenment but will always fall just short of the core  
the center that every girl reaches by the time forbidden fruit’s consequences are felt  
to them, words hold less meaning,  
hurt nips but does not scathe,  
bruises remain superficial  
we were born to bleed;  
blessed with an inextricable connection to one another  
but cursed with the intolerable burden of constant awareness  
how can you begin to understand?  
that i am fallible too  
this deity you once adorned  
now cast to the earth  
i was just a girl  
i am just a girl  
and i can’t look at the birthmark on my forehead in the same way  
maybe i should cut bangs

*Tiny horoscopes for a tiny campus*

## MICRO-ASTROLOGY

*Weekly advice and predictions*

**Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)**

Challenge yourself to give up on something that’s not bringing you joy. Like doing your taxes. The stars are telling you to commit tax fraud. Hypothetically.

**Pisces (February 19 – March 20)**

It seems the consequences of your actions are catching up with you. Try and be a good sport about it, but if you can’t, at least be a bad sport in an entertaining way!

**Aries (March 21 – April 19)**

Are you treating the symptom instead of the cause? Claritin will only do so much for your allergies, staying inside 24/7 is a much more effective plan.

**Taurus (April 20 – May 20)**

This week you’ll fish around for pens at the bottom of your bag and be amazed at how many have ended up down there. You think it’s quirky but really you’ve just wasted a lot of money buying new pens because you can’t find any of yours.

**Gemini (May 21 – June 20)**

You really need to get a tote bag, backpack, purse, giant pockets—literally anything. You cannot keep being a carry-your-shit-in-your-hands person.

**Cancer (June 21 – July 22)**

This week you shave a few minutes off your shower time by crying while washing your hair instead of after—there’s something to be said for that kind of efficiency!

**Leo (July 23 – August 22)**

Be careful of things around your room falling apart. You are not as good at DIY as you think you are.

**Virgo (August 23 – September 22)**

You’re not—not—a plant. Go photosynthesize.

**Libra (September 23 – October 22)**

You’re disappointed with your closet this week. No, this does not mean you should buy more clothes.

**Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)**

You’re in desperate need of some crafting time. Skip class and make some macaroni art.

**Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)**

It might be time to reconnect with nature a little. Go show your favorite TikTok to some cows.

**Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)**

Toss a ball around with a friend this week. Or at a friend if they’re really pissing you off.

# Israel’s democracy is under attack

BY DAN HAREL  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Current-day democracy in Israel is under considerable threat. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is pushing for a series of bills to allow the Knesset (Israeli parliament) to be able to override and/or avoid any and all checks and balances by the Supreme Court. This would make the power of the government and its coalitions unrestricted, highly likely to result in the oppression of minorities—including but not limited to Israeli Arabs, left-wing supporters, women and other groups—leading them to be able to do whatever they please and pass legislation that may be unethical and illegal under the current legal system.

Prior to the suggestion of these bills, Netanyahu has been involved in a long, extended series of three trials. Through his fourth and fifth terms as Prime Minister, he and close political allies within his inner circle have been under investigation for bribery, fraud and breach of trust. Yet, he claims that these new changes to the judicial system have nothing to do with these trials. It is not unreasonable to be suspicious that there is a connection between the two events. Alongside clearing his name from corruption, Netanyahu wants to promote right-wing ideas, including harsher treatment towards the Palestinians living in the West Bank.

Netanyahu and his party argue that the

bills would make the nation more democratic and they will use the decision of the majority to guide government policies, however, these changes would be doing quite the opposite. Due to the fact that Israel does not have a constitution serving as its legislative backbone, if the bills are passed, these elected officials would be allowed to pass legislation without having any checks by the voices of the people nor by the Supreme Court. This would undermine democracy and the regulation of law and order. Currently, Israel’s ministers have legal advisors who are independent and answer to the attorney-general of the country. With the new plan, Netanyahu wants to have ministers appoint their own advisors so they will agree with the decisions those ministers are making.

Despite Netanyahu’s party advocating that this is for the betterment of democracy and to promote the voice of the people, there is a vast number of people voicing their thoughts against the government and these drastic changes. For the past three months, hundreds of thousands of Israelis have been attending protests which have continuously filled the streets with those opposed to the passing of these bills, voicing their concerns that it will lead to a dictatorship. Israeli flags fill the streets with signs calling Netanyahu a “crime minister,” alongside pictures of founding fathers Theodor Herzl and Ben Gurion crying. Among this majority who do not agree with these bills stand a

lot of Israel’s elite—such as the defense apparatus, former generals, former chiefs of staff, former heads of the Shabak (Israel’s Security Agency), the Israeli Secret Service and former heads of the Mossad (Israel’s National Intelligence Agency). On the morning of Mar. 26, Israel’s minister of defense, Yoav Gallant, joined this group of elites. He publicly spoke out against the proposed regime change, which led Netanyahu to fire him. This only continued to fire up the public with the fear of a dictatorship since Netanyahu is shunning and firing anyone in power who stands against him. This is also an issue because some people who are investing their time and money in the country are withdrawing their support because the governmental structure of the currently democratic state is being changed, and that is not what they were supporting originally. Furthermore, strikes in high-profile places such as Israeli embassies and airports have joined the public’s attempts to push Netanyahu to reconsider. If passed, these bills could change the course of democracy in Israel.

These protests are not limited to the confines of Israel. When some of the Knesset members came to New York City, New York and Teaneck, New Jersey to try to convince Jewish doctors to make Aliyah (migrate) to Israel, they were faced with many Israeli Americans (my mom included) voicing their hatred and concern towards the proposed new policies.

As of Monday, Mar. 27, Netanyahu decided to bring his plan to a halt, and announced that he wants the government to have an open dialogue with the people about their concerns. While this process is being shelved, it seems that Netanyahu is not doing so with the intention of listening to the people, but to buy time and silence the increasingly disruptive protests and outcries that are getting more violent, and to end the current strike of high-demand workers.

As an Israeli citizen and someone who has many family members and friends who will be affected by these bills, it is very intimidating that the quality of their lives and their rights are at stake. My grandparents in Israel are continuously going to protests and voicing their concerns regarding the proposed changes. There is also a petition signed by thousands of Israeli citizens who believe that Netanyahu is not fit to lead this country. As a young boy, my family would always vote against Netanyahu and hope for a better future. Unfortunately, he has been in power for as long as I can remember. Without an end of term in sight, it is heartbreaking to the people asking for change that it likely won’t happen, but it seems like not much change can be done unless he is voted out of office. This does not seem likely anytime soon.



# Opinion: Baseball is harder

By MATTHEW BAKER-GRUNZA  
SPORTS EDITOR

**425 milliseconds.**  
This is how long it takes a 95 mph fast-ball to reach home plate. For comparison, an average human blinks at a speed of anywhere between 100 to 400 milliseconds. A batter has only milliseconds to decide if the pitch is a ball or a strike, and to decide if they need to swing or not. When you break it down, it shows how impossible it is to hit a baseball.  
Consider when Yankees right fielder Aaron Judge broke the American League record for single season home runs with 62 dingers. It may not seem like a major feat to hit 62 home runs considering Judge had 570 opportunities to do so this

season, but this low success rate speaks to the difficulty of the game.  
In the 2022 MLB season, the league batting average was only .243. This means that the average hitter got a hit 24.3 percent of the time he was up to bat. Compared to other sports and their average success rates, this is extremely low. If you complete 2/10 passes as a QB in the NFL, you will not be playing the next week. If you make 2/10 shots in the NBA, you are headed right to the bench. Ty Cobb is considered one of the best if not the best hitters of all time, and his career batting average was .366. The best hitter in MLB history was only successful 36.6 percent

of the time.  
Some may say that baseball is not a very physically demanding sport. For example, look at Prince Fielder. Prince Fielder was a first baseman in the league from 2005 to 2016 and was named to the All-Star team six times. He was also 5’11, 275 lbs, the average sports fan might think he is out of shape compared to the typical build expected from athletes. However, he could move his hands at a staggering speed, hitting balls as hard as 114.9 mph. Even though some baseball players appear out of shape and unathletic, they all have mastered the art of hand-eye coordination and bat speed required to be a

professional hitter.  
It is very often said that baseball is a game of failure. You can get three hits one game, and zero the next. But much like life, it is how you deal with that failure that really matters. In reality, the difficulty is what makes baseball so unique, and so loved as America’s pastime.

# Opinion: Should the NFL legalize cannabis?

By MICHAEL POWEL  
ROOKIE WRITER

Josh Gordon

- Failed multiple NFL & NCAA drug tests
- Suspended for 3 total seasons in the NFL and missed parts of 5 others all for breaking substance abuse policies
- Forced to end his career in 2020 due to missing another season because of substance abuse

VS

Montrezi Harrell

- Caught with 1lb of marijuana in vehicle
- Got arrested and charged with trafficking less than 5 lbs of marijuana
- Pleaded guilty to misdemeanor marijuana charge
- Expected to play today 10/26/22 against the toronto raptors for the 76ers

GRAPHIC BY MICHAEL POWEL '26

Darren Waller, Randy Gregory, Ricky Williams, Josh Gordon and Martavis Bryant all have been suspended for at least one full season for failed cannabis tests. Cannabis has ruined some of their careers and they aren’t the only ones that it has ruined.  
One of the main psychoactive ingredients of cannabis, THC, stimulates the part of the brain that is responsible for pleasure. THC causes a release of dopamine, a chemical that gives you a feeling of relaxation.  
It is estimated that 50 to 90 percent of NFL players still use cannabis despite NFL drug testing and substance abuse rules. It is mainly for pain management, but some players use it for performance enhancement. Additionally it is used to

improve oxygenation and decrease anxiety ahead of competitions.  
Calvin Johnson Jr., a Detroit Lions wide receiver and first-ballot Hall of Famer, is starting a new business plan post-football. Johnson, or as fans call him, Megatron, has a business degree from Georgia Tech and works with Primitiv, a Michigan-based cannabis research company. Johnson wants to be an advocate for current players of the league and encourage the NFL to relax the rules around cannabis use.  
Josh Gordon, a wide receiver and former Pro Bowler, had his career cut short many times due to positive cannabis tests. Gordon was suspended during his sophomore year at Baylor University after being charged with a misdemeanor can-

nabis possession charge. He failed a cannabis test ahead of his junior year of college and was forced to transfer. And since being in the NFL, he has been suspended five times by the NFL.  
One player that spoke out about cannabis use was former Super Bowl champion Chris Long. He admitted to using cannabis on multiple occasions during his 11-season career. He is now fighting for the legalization of cannabis in the NFL. “I think from a standpoint of what’s safer for people and the players, certainly people in the spotlight, it [cannabis] is far less harmful than alcohol and tobacco,” Long said on The Dan Patrick Show.  
Cannabis can come with side effects. Some physical effects might include breathing problems, increased heart rate

and intense nausea and vomiting. It can also come with some mental effects as well, for example temporary hallucinations and paranoia, depression, anxiety, etc. For professional athletes, smoking cannabis may give them pain relief, but if inhaled more frequently than not, it can cause their blood pressure levels to rise, increase their heart rates, and hamper their ability to exercise.  
The NFL should stop conducting cannabis tests. They should let players use cannabis for recovery and recreational use because it is healthier and better for them than opioids or other dangerous painkillers.



# Men's lax is back on track

BY LEXI SIPOS  
STAFF WRITER

This past Saturday, Apr. 1, the men's lacrosse team returned to the turf to play Washington College. After their recent Centennial Conference loss to Swarthmore College, the Mules were eager to bounce back. For the first 23 minutes, Muhlenberg's defense contained Washington's offense by keeping them scoreless. At the end of the game, Muhlenberg got the result they wanted with a 12-9 win against Washington College.

While this was a huge win for the Mules, the team is concentrated on what comes next. "We remained focused by taking it game by game. We can't get too far ahead of ourselves by looking at the season as a whole" commented Dominick Visintin '23. This perspective propels the team to be the best they can be and allows them to continue this positive momentum into the back-half of the season.

Most of all, the team contains essential elements that are a recipe for success. Matthew Regan '24 states, "One of our greatest strengths currently is our gritty mentality. We go into every game ready for a dogfight which prepares us mentally and physically for a battle whenever we



PHOTO BY PHOTO EDITOR AYDEN LEVINE '23

Jono Hillelsohn '25 has faith that this team will go far.

play. Another strength of ours is our team chemistry. It is rare to find a team as close as ours and it shows both on and off the field."

The dynamic is thriving, the Mules and coaches create the environment for the

program to surpass any challenge. With that said, no matter how many times a team wins, their true character shows when they face conflict. It is evident that the Muhlenberg men's lacrosse team encapsulates mental and physical strength

coupled with high standards. All in all, the players are committed and so are their fans. Ultimately, the rest of their opponents should come prepared because this is only the beginning strides for this unstoppable team.



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# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## Muhlenberg track & field outdoor invitational

*XC captains set their sights on success and growth.*

By CAITI KINNEAR  
STAFF WRITER



Natasha Furyk '25 jumping over hurdles at Muhlenberg Invitational.

On Saturday Apr. 1 the Muhlenberg track and field team competed right in their own backyard, Scotty Wood Stadium, in their second track meet of the outdoor season. After coming off of a successful indoor track season with multiple record breaks, Muhlenberg all-time top 10 performances and regional-qualifiers, the Mules kept this momentum going by continuing their strong start to the outdoor season.

John Panny '23 scored first place finishes in both the long jump and the triple jump. "I am extremely pleased with the team's performance this past weekend—not only in the sense that everyone competed hard and well, but more importantly in our overall enthusiasm surrounding the home meet. I think that these two aspects worked in tandem for our team pro-

ducing one of our best statistical outputs in a long time. Seeing the end results of where everyone finished was really awesome and quite frankly, rewarding" remarked Panny.

The team's hard work and enthusiasm was emphasized by the impressive results. One highlight was Dylan DeMagistris '24, who broke his own school record in the hammer throw and qualified for regionals in discus while coming in second place. Other first place performances came from Sam McDonough '24 in the 110m hurdles and Shira Gamson '26 in the triple jump, who now holds the third spot on the Muhlenberg all-time performance list in the women's triple jump. In addition, Russell Neuwirth '23 qualified for regionals in the 100m and scored the seventh position on the Muhlenberg all-time

performance list for the event. Neuwirth even qualified for regionals a second time in 4x100 along with Trevor Hitchcock '24, Josh Castro '25 and JP Nye '23, who collectively came in third place in the relay.

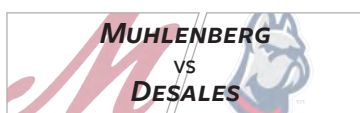
Another standout was Noel House's '24 first place finish, "I would say a top highlight all around was seeing Noel in his performance that was number one in the nation, which will likely qualify him for nationals in his first meet this season. It just shows all the work that he put in during the off season and how strong he is as an athlete. I think it really adds to just like us getting excited for the season," said Team Captain Adrienne Ellison '23.

This excitement is likely to pay off as the team rolls into the rest of the season and gets ready to compete in the Centennial Conference finals. "We want to

perform higher in conferences than we did in indoor, and we think we could do that if we just focus on where they can be used the most effectively," stated Ellison. This is a very reasonable goal, given that, as Panny exclaimed, "The team's overall focus, dedication and desire to succeed is the highest it has been since I have been here. While I cannot definitively predict our team's performance come conferences, I fully believe that we will be blowing others' expectations out of the water—including our own." After an extremely successful home meet, the Muhlenberg track and field team is ready to continue the hard work that led them to their achievements over the weekend. More accomplishments are likely to follow going into the rest of the season and in the upcoming conference meet.

Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Apr. 6 - Apr. 12

### Softball



Thurs, Apr. 6 @ 4:00 p.m.  
Center Valley, Pa.

### Baseball



Fri, Apr. 7 @ 3:30 p.m.  
Swarthmore, Pa.

### Women's Lacrosse



Sat, Apr. 8 @ 1:00 p.m.  
Scotty Wood Stadium

### Men's Lacrosse



Wed, Apr. 12 @ 1:00 p.m.  
Scotty Wood Stadium





Vote in the SGA General Election starting at 7:00pm on April 20.

THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2023  
VOLUME CXLIV, ISSUE XVIII  
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IN THIS ISSUE:

## Mohsin Hamid's four-year journey to Muhlenberg



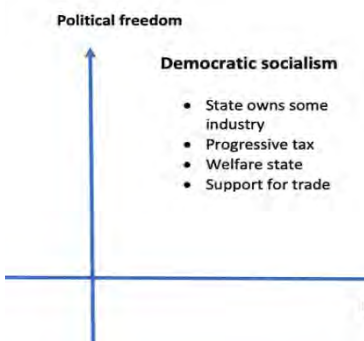
### NEWS

Electrical fire in Seegers Union causes evacuation.  
**read more on page 4**



### ARTS & CULTURE

Patchwork theatre festival premieres.  
**read more on page 5**



### OP/ED

James Wynne '23 discusses socialism in the United States.  
**read more on page 8**



### SPORTS

Soccer team welcomes Coach Prescott.  
**read more on page 12**

BY ALEX CABAN-ECHEVARRIA  
STAFF WRITER

Mohsin Hamid, a British-Pakistani novelist and author of "Exit West," visited campus on Tuesday, Apr. 11, to give a public reading, talk and book-signing. The event was hosted by the English department and the Center for Ethics. This year's theme for the Center for Ethics is Speculative Futures, incorporating many events, including a film series and culminating in Hamid's talk. He spoke to students, faculty and community members in Miller Forum about his fourth novel, "Exit West,"

published in 2017.

"Exit West" was first introduced to campus four years ago when Borders, Nationalisms and Identities was the Center for Ethics theme. That fall, the Center for Ethics hosted an Invitation to Conversation with professors Jim Bloom, Ph.D., Ioanna Chatzidimitriou, Ph.D. and Sharon Albert, Ph.D. that discussed this novel in preparation for his initially planned visit in April 2020, which was postponed due to COVID-19. Although the original plan was not fulfilled, Muhlenberg did not abandon it.

The Center for Ethics theme  
**SEE HAMID PAGE 3**



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

## Candidates for SGA student body president outline their views and policies



**JAKE FORSTEIN '24**



**MARGERY LEIT '24**

COMPILED BY KATHERINE CONLON  
MANAGING EDITOR

The 2023 Student Government Association (SGA)

election is just around the corner, with voting opening on Thursday, Apr. 20, at 7:00 p.m., and lasting 24 hours. In order to allow the student body to make

an informed decision before casting their votes for president, The Muhlenberg Weekly asked both candidates (Jacob Forstein '24 and Margery Leit '24) for

their responses to a series of questions. Below are their responses, which have been edited for grammar and clarity.

**SEE SGA PAGE 3**



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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The Muhlenberg Weekly strives for accuracy in reporting and writing, but we acknowledge that mistakes happen. Readers are invited to submit corrections about errors in articles, and they should be submitted to weeklyeditor@gmail.com. Corrections are also brought to our staff's attention by our own editors and writers. Our staff will review the suggested correction, consult with the author of the article, and issue the appropriate correction. Online corrections are located at the bottom of the article. Print corrections are located within the paper, on the page indicated in the online edition. However, The Weekly does not grant take-down requests for articles.

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We request that advertising material be submitted by the Monday preceding publication at 5 p.m. If materials have not been received at that time, the advertisement will not run and the advertiser is still responsible for 100% payment. We reserve the right to decline any advertisement that is misleading, inaccurate, fraudulent, or deemed generally unacceptable. This determination will be made by the Business Staff in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief. The Muhlenberg Weekly maintains a distinction between its news & editorial content and advertising. As such, advertisements will not be accepted if they imitate the general style of The Weekly, intentionally or unintentionally. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: headlines, bylines, fonts, and column-arrangements. In order to make this distinction, The Weekly also reserves the right to include the word "advertisement" on any advertisement that is deemed too native.

# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

**4/11/23**

Medical—Report of sick student in Parents Plaza, MCEMS responded, student refused treatment or transport  
Traffic—Report of keys locked in vehicle, Campus Safety Officer retrieved keys

Hoffman house, individuals to exchange information  
Property—Report of found bracelet in the Hoffman house, owner unknown  
Medical—Report of student at Trexler pavilion transferred to hospital

**4/12/23**

Property—Report of found phone in the library, owner later claimed item  
Suspicious Person—Report of suspicious person, individual identified and spoken to with no further incident

**4/14/23**

Traffic—Report of minor motor vehicle accident at faculty lots, individuals to exchange information

**4/15/23**

Odor—Report of odor of marijuana, individuals spoken to and investigation to continue

**4/13/23**

Traffic—Report of minor motor vehicle accident at

## CORRECTION

In our last issue, Katherine Conlon's article "Supreme Court case threatens to reverse Biden's student debt relief policy" was printed twice, thus erasing Becca Baitel's article "Celebrating Healthy Sexuality at Muhlenberg through Women's History Month Event." The full article is available at [www.muhlenbergweekly.com](http://www.muhlenbergweekly.com). We sincerely apologize for this error.

# 2023 Commencement Luncheon



*Immediately following commencement ceremonies, graduates, families and guests are invited to attend an all-you-care-to-eat buffet luncheon in the Wood Dining Commons.*

Tickets:



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## FROM SGA PAGE 1

**How will you serve as an advocate for the student body and what is the main problem you think they are facing?**

**Forstein:** I plan to serve as an advocate through consistency, communication and collaboration. No one can do it all alone, and SGA is an organization filled with dedicated people that all want to make Muhlenberg the best it can be. Finding ways to engage the entire General Assembly to create the most positive change is an absolute necessity. Additionally, I want to directly support our campus affinity groups by working with OML [The Office of Multicultural Life] and the next Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging chair to determine and address the most direct needs of these groups.

One of the biggest issues the student body is facing right now is that so many of them are feeling unsupported by the institution and by SGA. Over the past semester, I have made major strides in improving this from the SGA side of things through the revamped Ambassador Program, which has engaged nearly 50 percent of active clubs on campus in just the first few months of its inception. As president, I am dedicated to getting students more involved in major decisions made by the SGA and administration, and creating opportunities for clubs to collaborate on SGA initiatives and events.

**Leit:** I firmly believe a good advocate of a community is someone who is both connected and consistently reflective on the nature of their community. At a young age I was taught about the importance of listening to understand, and in college I'm majoring in philosophy which is constantly educating me on how to think, understand and communicate with others. This being said, I think I will serve as a great advocate for the student body because of my ability to actively listen and then think critically about what I hear before responding. Then when it comes to responding, I ensure that I am considering the best interest of our students, and how it will be impacting the person on campus who I haven't even said hi to yet. Which connects to what I think the main problem our community is facing is, which is a lack of transparency with our

communications. Being transparent and communicative upfront is incredibly important for our community because it is what creates the basis of trust for working with each other to truly be productive with our goals. If I were to be elected president I would want to prioritize this spirit of listening to one another with the intention of understanding and learning from one another.

**What are some of your primary campaign issues that you plan on prioritizing during your term?**

**Forstein:** Some of my primary campaign issues are focused on transparency and support for students. The student wages and menstrual products ad-hocs have done great work over the past couple of years, and I want to continue and expand on these initiatives, while looking at the most realistic ways for ad-hocs to function for future SGAs. I also want to improve the understanding of SGA's inner function and capabilities, which I have started through the SGA voting database, which can be found on our Instagram's linktree or through the SGA website. I want to expand on this work by creating SGA open forums, which would be town-hall style events where we do not conduct new business, but focus on bringing in members of the student body to provide ideas, give feedback and engage in dialogue. SGA should not be a scary place for people to come to and voice their opinions, and I hope that these open forums can help make that happen.

**Leit:** If elected president I really want to focus on fostering a better sense of community amongst the student body, which I believe can best be achieved through making information more accessible to students and through improved communication that allows students to be included in what is happening. I often feel that we have a disconnect between groups in our community and if there was better communication flow people would be able to involve themselves more with the community. In my campaign I discuss my idea of a community calendar which I think would be very productive in communicating to the wider campus about the variety of events that we have going on so that they can get involved. Additionally, a

feeling of community is enhanced when the students feel uplifted by their school and I want to focus on more transparent communication between administration and students.

**It is thought by many that student government lacks the resources to make real change; how do you plan on subverting these expectations?**

**Forstein:** I want to subvert this misconception by showing the change that's possible. Change isn't a quick thing, and it takes hard work and dedication, but consistent advocacy on behalf of the student body and listening to their needs are the first steps in making real change. I want to get free contraceptives into the dorms, lower GQ prices and develop strong relationships with clubs across campus. The change can happen, and it will, and the more people that invest in the change we aim to achieve, the more we can do together.

**Leit:** I don't believe that student government lacks the resources to make change, but rather that there is a misconception about the change SGA can facilitate. It's important to me to be realistic and practical about the types of change SGA can really fund. Student government receives a lot of money from the Student Activities Fee which is a part of everyone's tuition, and it's one of our primary jobs as SGA to allocate that money to clubs and organizations on campus to support them in making a space full of enriching activities. I want to make it easier for students to know how to request funds, how much funding we have at any given moment, and most importantly I want the students to know what SGA is considering with the allocation of funding so that they can better understand our process as an association.

**How do you think your past leadership positions have prepared you for the role of president?**

**Forstein:** Throughout my time at Muhlenberg, I've been fortunate to have so many opportunities for leadership, which have all helped prepare me for the role of SGA president. For the past year, I have served as the Walz Hall Director (and the year before that I was a Prosser RA.) This experience helped me

grow my skills in advocacy, mediation, event planning and collaborating with a team. As a former club president and part of the founding membership (shoutout to Myths 'N Mules), I learned a lot about collaborating on an individual level, listening to the needs and concerns of constituents, and managing time well with a group of people. Finally, within SGA, I currently serve as the Recording Secretary, and I have been a member of two out of four of our permanent SGA committees. Through these experiences, I have been a key member of many decisions, such as redesigning the special election system in the fall, creating an internal SGA conduct system, and rewriting the SGA attendance policy. Connecting with students and administration alike in all of these positions have all helped prepare me for this role.

**Leit:** Leadership is truly incomplete without teamwork and I feel that through the leadership experiences I have held in the past, collaboration was emphasized as the foundation of success for any group. My other major is theatre, and I have held roles in both directing and assistant directing and it is abundantly clear that when a team is not working together nothing is going to be accomplished. Through that directing work, I also know that controlling and maintaining the decorum of a space is important for productivity. I feel that I am well-equipped to be a productive leader for our community because I have the ability to work efficiently and effectively with others. The ability to think creatively for solutions has also been a strong skill of mine that has yet to fail me. Additionally, I have found that the work that I have done in leadership training workshops has taught me a lot about the value of time management which is extremely important with this role because it's important to remember that whoever gets elected to be SGA president is also a student who has to manage the responsibilities of their own life and their role. Learning time management definitely has already helped me with being more productive in my life, and I have no doubt that it would similarly serve me well if elected president.

## FROM HAMID PAGE 1

in 2020-2021 was Engaging in Speech and Action, which incorporated "Exit West" as a campus read a second time. A faculty panel discussion analyzing "Exit West" with Hamid, Emanuela Kucik, Ph.D., Dawn Lonsinger, Ph.D., Leticia Robles-Moreno, Ph.D. and Mark Stein, Ph.D. continued the past year's discussion on Borders, Nationalisms and Identities. While Hamid was scheduled to speak at the College for the following year's theme (2021-2022) Pandemic: Response, Resilience, Reflection, his visit was again postponed due to COVID-19. Now, "Exit West" returns to relevance as the novel deals with themes of nationalities and borders and imagines a future world where everyone migrates either literally or metaphorically.

At the public talk, Hamid began with an anecdote about not speaking for one month after being frightened when he moved to the United States as a child. He

realized through this experience the true fear of being a migrant in a new country and channeled that compassion into writing "Exit West." He read a passage from the first page, and said that the story is, "about reckoning with the passage of time and migration and to remind us that because we move through time, we are in a way connected to those who move across geographies."

Creative writing students were also invited to participate in a Q&A with Hamid, hosted by Lonsinger, who got to ask him about his experience as a novelist. Hamid told the students how he learned to make time to write, finding his passion while studying at Princeton University. Hamid was born in Lahore, Pakistan, and moved to the United States at age three with his family when his father was earning his Ph.D. at Stanford University. At 18, Hamid returned to the United States and after graduating college, attended Harvard Law School. He worked in New York City and London and began dedicating more

and more time to his writing, until eventually deciding to make it his full-time job.

Students asked about his journey to Muhlenberg that was four years in the making, his writing process and censorship. Hamid said, "The pandemic is a reminder that reality isn't real," explaining that recent events, particularly the pandemic, have created a rupture in reality. He said that "'Exit West' was at first written as a reaction to migration and the election, and even now, the issue of migration is never going to go away. It speaks to how we talk about where we come from." He went on to say that humans are the only species that believe borders exist and that "humanity didn't start in Allentown," which received a chuckle from the students.

Elizabeth Mahony '23, who was at the Q&A, said, "I read 'Exit West' as an incoming freshman and now have revisited it in my Reading for Writers CUE, and both times I was struck by Hamid's

powerful storytelling and lyric writing. I really enjoyed both the Q&A and the talk and found them incredibly valuable as a young writer." Hamid gave the writing students advice: "Give yourself time to write. Write almost every day. When you do, something starts happening."

Hamid ended by saying, "I wanted to explore what it's like to leave something behind. For every immigrant, there is an emigrant; there's somebody who has left their country as well as someone who has come to their country... I thought, I'm going to write a novel that's about a first love. Stories about first loves are, by their very nature, stories about something beautiful that passes. I wanted to write a novel about letting go... Written literature is not doing the same thing as TV or film. It's inviting people to play make-believe."



# enACT, Hillel and SGA partner to create journaling stations

BY MATTHEW KLINGER  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Spring has come to the Lehigh Valley, meaning that as flowers and temperatures shoot up, so does student stress as the semester draws to a close. However, three student organizations on campus—enACT, Hillel and Student Government Association (SGA)—are seeking to use the beauty of the season to reduce student stress as finals quickly approach. Their plan? To use existing benches nestled in gardens on campus as a place for journaling spots with free journals and prompts for quiet reflection in nature.

Maddie Davidson '25 details how the idea “all started with Ira Blum [’10] from Hillel, who approached me saying that he was interested in using funds for a community engagement event.” Blum also asked Danny Burden '23, the Campus Engagement Chair for SGA, to help with devising a plan for using the funds. Davidson and Burden decided that it would be a great idea to combine enACT’s mission of sustainability with SGA’s mental health initiatives. Davidson drew on her experience working with an environmental arts and education center where they created nature benches in local parks as a blueprint for the journaling stations. The stations will include a number of prompts on top of the station, with a weather-proof cabinet in the back of the station stocked with sustainably-sourced journals. Hillel, enACT and SGA saw nature journaling as the perfect way to incorporate everyone’s values, because, as Davidson states, “being outside with nature boosts people’s

moods and makes them feel healthier and better.”

The journaling stations will be placed in two gardens on campus: the existing Serenity Garden next to the Gabriel House and the Serpentine Garden, near Trexler Library. The focus of the prompts will be different at each site. While the Serenity Garden prompts will be more centered on grounding prompts focused on the current moment, the Serpentine Garden will have more future-focused prompts. The placement of the journaling station in the Serpentine Garden is especially exciting because for years that garden has been locked, neglected and inaccessible to the student body. Thanks to a coordinated effort by the garden club and enACT earlier this semester, the garden has since been restored. The hope is for the journaling station to provide a place of quiet contemplation for students to enjoy the newly reopened space and de-stress towards the end of a busy semester.

In addition to providing a place of reflection and relaxation, enACT, SGA and Hillel are hopeful the stations will also help students come together. enACT is planning on holding numerous events throughout the month of April as Earth Day approaches. To give students the chance to partake in the new journaling stations, they hope to build the stations in public where students can stop by to help make them. In addition to building the new stations in public, enACT is also going to be holding a make-your-own journal event Friday, Apr. 21 in Fahy Commons to demonstrate what can be done creatively using only sustainable mate-



PHOTO BY ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR MADDIE CILIENTO '25

A bench surrounded by nature.

rials. The hope is for this to inspire students to use those journals to reflect and be restored in nature.

Ultimately, Davidson wants the journaling stations to ensure that students realize “nature is everywhere and it is important to see how people connect with it in their own ways. That is what builds

trust, strength, and passion so people feel prepared and ready to act.”

## Fire alarm fiasco

BY CYDNEY WILSON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Alarm echoed through Seegers Union, both literally and figuratively, at approximately 5:00 p.m. on Monday, Apr. 17, when the fire alarm went off.

Students milled around in Parents Plaza for somewhere between 45 minutes and an hour waiting to be allowed back into the building. While rumors circulated that this may have been a drill, there was a very real cause for the alarm.

Brian Fidati, Director of Campus Safety, and Ellen Lentine, Director of Seegers Union and the Student Experience, shared that, “There was an electrical disruption within the breaker panel in [Seegers Union] 112. A dimmer switch in [Seegers Union] 113 tripped a breaker. The safety features functioned as designed and prevented any further damage. The disruption caused smoke and a detectable odor for a period of time throughout the Light Lounge area of Seegers Union. Rooms 111-113 remained off-line throughout the rest of the evening at the request of the Allentown Fire Department, out of an

abundance of caution.”

They also expressed their gratitude for Plant Operations, and shared that students were respectful while having to evacuate.

This incident caused disruption to many students in Seegers at the time, including Java Joes’ baristas Mayu Lee '24 and Kailie Strutin '23.

Lee shared, “I was in the middle of my Java shift, making a drink for someone—I rushed to get as many drinks out as possible that were paid for, then headed outside. Me and a group of friends tried to pass the time outside by playing ninja!”

“I wish they sent out info about what it was but I was glad they caught it early and everyone was safe,” said Strutin. She added that she “left a caramel macchiato sitting, sorry to whoever’s drink it was.”

Most students were only minorly inconvenienced, “I was honestly not really concerned. At first, I figured it was just a drill, but after the first truck showed up, I realized it was serious. I knew it’d get resolved, but I was bummed my game of pool got put on hold,” said Mason Patrizio '26.

“It all happened so fast. I was eating dinner and then all of a sudden the alarm went off and they wanted us to leave. People were taking plates of food out with them, it was actually kind of funny. I didn’t end up coming back in because it was taking too long, so I didn’t even get to finish dinner.”

For students who might be worried about an event like this happening again, Fidati and Lentine share, “There are no significant lasting impacts on the building from this incident. As of Tuesday morning, all rooms are back online. Plant Operations will be working on replacing any damaged materials in the breaker panel throughout the week.”

Fidati and Lentine added, “To put this incident in perspective, there were 135 fire alarms on campus during the 2022 calendar year. As of today, we have had 36 fire alarms in 2023. The most common causes for these alarms are burnt food, steam from a shower, and dirty detectors; however, none of these alarms have been a result of an actual fire.”

Ultimately, while many students were left annoyed and inconvenienced, none



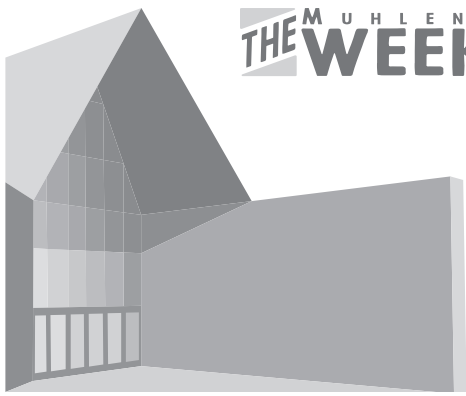
PHOTO BY PHOTO EDITOR AYDEN LEVINE '23

Students stand outside Seegers Union after evacuating the building.

were harmed and the issue seems to be fully resolved.

Cameron Eaton '23 summarized the event, saying “At first, no one really wanted to leave the building, but we knew it was probably something serious when so many fire trucks arrived. It almost became like a social event; everyone was gathered outside and chatting. We waited for what I think was about 45 minutes before we were able to go back in. Fortunately, there was no fire!”





"I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being." - Oscar Wilde

# Patchwork theatre festival is stitched together



The cast of "The Little Prince" performing as a part of Patchwork Theatre Festival.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA HOLTZ '24

BY ALMARAH URMAN  
STAFF WRITER

On Fri. Apr. 14, "This Random World" opened the Patchwork Theatre Festival, a brand new, independent, completely student-produced theatre festival at Muhlenberg. The festival features three productions, "This Random World," "The Little Prince" and "Constellations."

"Patchwork Theatre Festival came about because we are a group of theatre-makers who wanted to expand student theatre opportunities and try our hand at self-producing. We have pulled together this festival without a budget. We truly started with nothing but the idea for a play festival just a few short months ago, some of us not knowing each other prior but pulled together over a common goal," remarked Alison Rutyna '23, who directed "Constellations" and was part of the team of coordinators.

"Each director picked their own show, and they all have their own connections to the shows that they picked. We had exactly one meeting last semester and after deciding we were going to do a festival and tossing tentative show ideas out there, we were discussing how the shows themselves don't quite fit one theme but we're doing all of them under collective ideas: creating art for the sake of art and creating more opportunities on campus. I was the one to suggest the name of Patchwork because what we were talking

about reminded me of a patchwork quilt; the patches may look different but they all come together to make one beautiful thing," said Shira Holtz '24, associate director of "The Little Prince" and another festival coordinator.

The coordinators succeeded in their goal, giving more than 30 students the opportunity to participate in creating art independently of any established organization on campus. "I think Patchwork amplifies the opportunities for upper-class students to pursue student-produced work which is an incredible process as it allows for folks to exercise what they're learning and continue to learn as artists by working independently," shared Hannah Verdun '24, one of the actors in "Constellations." The Patchwork productions were particularly noteworthy due to the lack of faculty involvement and sponsorship, giving those involved a great learning experience as far as building theatre from the ground up.

"Patchwork is so meaningful because it really proves that we can all make our own opportunities. It's students that feel passionate about making theatre. I think it's extremely important for people to realize that you don't just have to wait for an opportunity to find you, you really can go out and make it happen if you have the drive. That's what Patchwork is to me, it's people working to make their dreams a reality," remarked Irene Keeney '23, another actor in "Constellations."

"This isn't my first time self-producing on campus. It's actually my third time and each time, what I have found is you find your people who support you and it's difficult, but you push through, roll with the punches and you come out a better artist for it. And in a larger sense, I am a huge fan of combatting the stereotype that you have to be a starving artist waiting tables in New York City until someone gives you your big break. What I think Patchwork is trying to do is test the theory that if you are waiting for an opportunity, just make one and you will figure it out. Definitely easier said than done, but if you break it down step by step, you accomplish step one, then two, then three and eventually you have done it!" said Hayley Arnold '23, "This Random World" director and festival coordinator.

As the Patchwork Festival concludes its first weekend, one of its productions, "The Little Prince," has already closed.

"For me, getting the chance to explore theater in a super creative setting with such extremely talented and kind people really brought 'The Little Prince's' message of imagination, innocence and connection to the stage (or amphitheater/rehearsal hall) in a very full circle way. I'm so endlessly grateful for Patchwork and the opportunity to work on this piece with this team!" reflected Mattea Pappa '26, a "The Little Prince" cast member.

"Both of our performances and the fact that people really showed up and gave the

festival and everyone involved so much love was mind-blowing. We even got a couple of YikYaks about the festival this weekend, and as we know, YikYak is the highest form of theatre criticism. But in all seriousness, it's amazing that we created something that ended up meaning something to this campus," said Maddy Burk '23, director of "The Little Prince" and another festival coordinator.

Their audience agreed with this sentiment. "I thought 'The Little Prince' was great! I read it in French class in high school and it was really cool seeing the story come to life! The ensemble created an ambient sound that enhanced the [viewing] experience. It helped transport the audience into the world of the play," said Lindsay Batzar '26, about her audience experience.

"Seeing the Patchwork shows was illuminating. I felt surrounded by the love the actors had put into the shows. They were there to tell a story that they had grown to know and adore over the past through months and it was amazing to see them perform and share that adoration with the audience," remarked Michaela Zahner, '24.

Patchwork Theatre Festival has one more weekend, where you can see 'Constellations' and 'This Random World.'



# The success of Red Doors Play Festival

BY AMY SWARTZ  
STAFF WRITER

This past weekend six plays debuted as part of the Muhlenberg Theatre Association's (MTA) Red Doors Play Festival (RDPF). Every semester, six short student-directed and cast plays are produced. Red Doors Play Festival gives students the opportunity to be part of a shorter production, with performances typically ranging from ten to 30 minutes each. This semester, the plays were "Emotional Baggage" by Lindsay Price, "Friendship, Love and the In-Between" by Lauren Silverstein '23, "Losing an Angel" by Gred Urbaitis, "Someone in Some Future Time" by Lottie Segal '23, "Speed Date" by Janey Allard and "Grade Raid" by Steven Belloise '25. The performances took place Saturday Apr. 15 and Sunday Apr. 16 afternoon in The Red Doors, with professors, students and families gathering to watch the shows.

Kayla Hartman '24, RDPF Coordinator, gives insight on her own experience, being a part of the process for multiple semesters and having strong admiration for the program. She says, "This was my third semester as the Red Door Coordinator and my fourth working with the festival. I've stayed in this position for so long because I love doing work where I get to help students get involved with theatre on campus and the MTA. In the past we've had over 60 students involved, and I love getting to help make all of their experiences rewarding and fulfilling."

RDPF is a great place for both experienced students, as well as students who want to get involved in theatre for the first time. Carper Wiggins '26, made his theatre debut in "Losing an Angel." Speaking on RDPF and new theatre experience, he said "It was definitely a good



PHOTO BY MEGAN HANSEN '26

Eva Schwartz '26 and Dylan Sheppard '25 performing in the Red Door Play Festival

place for people just getting started with acting like me. I felt pretty encouraged by it, because everyone was pretty positive." He detailed that his favorite part was "Probably the collaboration between the directors and actors, and how everyone worked as a team and was passionate about the play!"

When asked about her experience working on RDPF, Meg Trageser '25 said, "My favorite part of Red Doors, like other MTA productions is how everything is done by students. I think there's something really special about that." She also detailed specifics unique to the production she worked on, "Emotional Baggage," saying how "the show had no spoken dia-

logue, which was incredibly interesting." With student directors choosing which shows they want to see put on stage, it allows for a wide variety of different kinds of productions to take place. Every single show in RDPF takes on different theatrical methods, with each one being unique.

Steven Belloise '25 both wrote and directed a show in the festival, "Grade Raid." The show detailed two students who decided to break into a teacher's office to change a grade, but throughout their time together, they discover details about themselves. Belloise detailed how his play became a part of RDPF, saying "I actually wrote it for the Arts Marathon for the 24-hour playwright challenge. The

idea to put it as a Red Door started as a joke, but the more I considered it, the more interested I was in directing something of my own. I really enjoyed writing the play, and even though it was a rough draft for the challenge, my friends really enjoyed it and encouraged me to propose it."

He also discusses how directing was a very niche experience for him, saying "It was different because I had never taken control of a show, for the lack of a better phrase. What the position meant to me was that I was helping make other actors better and portray honesty in an exciting and captivating way and that I also had a direct and conscious impact on them." RDPF gives students the opportunity to have new experiences in productions, whether that be acting, directing or writing plays, that they may have never been able to do in previous credits.

For many actors and directors, RDPF was one of their first productions at Muhlenberg. It is an accessible way to gain experience working in theatre, for both students that choose theatre as their field of study, but also students who want to work on productions recreationally.

Hartman added, "I love working on the Red Door Play Festival because it gives an opportunity to students who can feel left out or forgotten about. This is a festival for playwrights who haven't been able to get their work onstage yet, for directors who are on their first official production, for actors who haven't been in a departmental production yet, for people who have wondered if they would make a good stage manager. I love the Red Doors because it is a festival that is truly for anybody and everybody to just make art, learn, and have fun together. Working on it for this long has been the most fulfilling part of my college career."

## Ken Zuckerman shares his talents with the campus community

BY DANNY MILKIS  
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

Ken Zuckerman, a Grammy-nominated sarod (a fretless string instrument in Indian classical music) player and musicologist who has dedicated his life to the study and performance of Indian classical music, performed in Moyer Hall's Miller Forum on Wed. Apr. 5 alongside Nimit Mitta, a highly accomplished Tabla player and percussionist, for an evening of Raga music.

A raga is a melodic framework used in classical Indian music. It is a series of musical notes arranged in a specific sequence that forms a basis for improvisation and composition. A raga is not just a scale or a mode, but a complex structure that encompasses specific rules for how to use certain notes, which notes to emphasize and which notes to avoid. Each raga has a distinct mood, emotion and personal-

ity that can be expressed through different musical phrases, rhythms and ornamentations. Indian ragas are typically associated with specific times of the day, seasons or emotions and are often used to create a particular ambiance or atmosphere in a musical performance. There are hundreds of ragas in Indian classical music, each with its unique characteristics, and the genre continues to evolve as more adaptations reintroduce the raga stylings into contemporary Indian music.

Born in New York City in 1949, Zuckerman began his musical studies at a young age. Starting out in the 1970s, he became interested in Indian classical music and began studying under the legendary sarod player Ustad Ali Akbar Khan. Zuckerman studied under Khan for over 30 years, becoming one of his most accomplished disciples. He is particularly interested in the history and evolution of the sarod and has written several articles and books on

the subject. In 1997, Zuckerman founded the Ali Akbar College of Music in Basel, Switzerland, which offers classes in Indian classical music and hosts concerts and performances by Zuckerman and other musicians.

"I feel that Muhlenberg is very privileged to have had Ken Zuckerman come to perform for us," said Dylan DeMagistris '24. "He is a master of his craft and has learned from the best Raga players in the world so I have been very fortunate to have experienced Indian classical musical traditions and culture at such an advanced level."

Zuckerman's performance on Friday evening was characterized by his deep understanding of the intricate rhythms and melodies of Indian classical music. His ability to bring out the nuances and subtleties of the music and the calming tone of his speaking voice added a deeply meditative and introspective experience

for the campus audience.

Music department chair Ted Conner, PhD., described Zuckerman as "the Miles Davis of Hindustani Ragas," and explained at the event that "Whenever Ken Zuckerman performs on our campus, Muhlenberg College is the center of the music world. Tonight, Muhlenberg College is the center of the music world."

Earlier this year, Ken was honored by the Prime Minister of India for his dedication to Indian classical music and significant cultural contributions.

"I thought the performance was captivating," said Joe Grisanzio '23. "Both artists onstage were extremely skilled in their ability to create ideas and converse with one another through their playing. It was also a great expansion of the material we've covered in my World Music class."



# Senior self-taught musician discusses upcoming pop-punk album

BY SHAIYAN FEISAL  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

Self-taught musician Matthew Robertson '23 is releasing a new album called "Sweet Graffiti" under his artist name "B3rt" on streaming services such as Spotify and Apple Music on Wed. Apr. 26th. According to Robertson, "the album genre is upbeat pop-punk, specifically pop-punk from the early 2000s. I was inspired by bands like Blink-182, Sum-41, Paramore, Avril Lavigne and very early Fall Out Boy, but there's also a little bit of an influence from underground 80s alternative bands like Social Distortion, Husker Du and The Replacements."

Robertson is an environmental science major with very little classroom experience related to music. "Aside from a few semesters of guitar lessons, I have only taken one music-related class, 'Pop, Rock, and Soul.' In regards to the contrast with my major and making music, it's certainly something I know a lot of people in both fields find surprising but I think it's proof that you can be thoroughly entrenched in two drastically different disciplines and still do well in both," he said.

In regards to coming up with a title for the album, Robertson detailed how it was

a difficult process. "Coming up with the title of the album was more challenging than I anticipated, especially compared to my previous works. Maybe it could have been named after one of the songs or an homage to another pop-punk band or album. After a while I decided on the concept for the cover art and it was in the style of graffiti so I knew that I wanted it to be something graffiti. I finally decided on 'Sweet Graffiti' because I really liked the way it sounded when spoken aloud. I also felt like the title perfectly encapsulated the overall tone of the album so I would say that's why I decided on 'Sweet Graffiti.'"

Robertson also discussed his process for creating the songs featured on "Sweet Graffiti." "The process is different for everyone and for me it greatly depends on the song. For example, for one of the songs, I wrote the lyrics, recorded the instruments and vocals and edited and mixed the whole thing within a day. Other songs usually take longer with some of them having their lyrics tweaked over a whole month. This album came together rather quickly for the most part with half the songs being written in December of 2022 and all of the initial recording finished in early February. After that I spent

about a month just adjusting and tweaking little things here and there. Overall, I put a lot more effort in the post-production than I have done in the past and I think it really paid off." Robertson's previous works were more political, but a message he wants his audience to take away from this album is that "it's okay to screw up a relationship, it's ok to feel bad after a breakup and it's ok to feel sad."

Robertson's post-graduation plans include an internship with The Walt Disney Company as a Conservation Presenter in the Animal Kingdom at Walt Disney World. He described it as "a position where I interact with guests in the park and talk about the conservation issues we are currently facing."

As it's Robertson's last semester here at Muhlenberg, he discussed that "depending on what I may do in the future this may be my last album for a while at least. I would also like to say that out of all of my other works this has been the album I've had the most fun, writing, recording and overall the album I'm most proud of. I still listen to the first 6 songs on the album and just think to myself 'Wow I made this.' It's really the first time I've enjoyed listening to my own voice."



PHOTO COURTESY OF MATTHEW ROBERTSON '23

Matthew Robertson '23 discusses his new album.

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PHOTO BY COLE GEISSLER

Visiting musician Ken Zuckerman plays the sarod during a concert on Indian Classical music.

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# Socialism in the United States: a promising alternative to individualism and market-based approaches

BY JAMES WYNNE  
STAFF WRITER

Socialism has become a buzzword in United States political discourse in recent years. Talks of socialism in the U.S. really began to gain traction when Senator Bernie Sanders threw his hat in the 2016 presidential election on a platform of integrating socialist policies into American government. In response, many of his political opponents and media outlets began to use the term pejoratively to describe any policy that emphasizes collective action or redistribution of wealth. Consequently, Pew Research Center found that 55 percent of Americans had a negative impression of the term “socialism” as of 2019. However, this simplistic view of socialism fails to capture the complexity and nuances of this ideology. I argue that socialism has the potential to address many of the social and economic problems facing the United States today.

First, it is important to understand what socialism is and what it is not. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy argues that socialism is “best defined in contrast with capitalism, as socialism has arisen both as a critical challenge to capitalism, and as a proposal for overcoming and replacing it.” At its core, socialism is an economic and political system that

emphasizes the collective ownership of the means of production and distribution of goods and services. This means that instead of private individuals or corporations owning factories, land and other resources necessary for production, they are collectively owned and managed by the community of working class citizens or the state. Socialism also emphasizes the idea of social justice and equality, advocating for the redistribution of wealth and resources to ensure that everyone has access to the basic necessities of life, such as healthcare, education and housing.

Contrary to what many opponents of socialism argue, socialism does not necessarily mean a complete eradication of private property or a state-run economy. Rather, socialism can take many different forms, ranging from democratic socialism—which advocates for a mixed economy with a balance between public and private ownership—to market socialism, which proposes a market economy with social ownership of the means of production.

One of the main arguments against socialism in the United States is that it goes against the principles of individualism and free-market capitalism, which have been ingrained in American culture and politics. However, it is important to note that these principles have not al-

ways been dominant in the United States. Throughout its history, the country has experimented with various forms of economic systems, from agrarian socialism in the early 19th century to the New Deal programs of the 1930s, which implemented policies such as Social Security, unemployment benefits and minimum wage laws.

Furthermore, many of the social and economic problems facing the United States today—such as income inequality, healthcare disparities and climate change—cannot be adequately addressed by individualistic, market-based solutions alone. These problems require collective action and government intervention to ensure that everyone has access to the resources and opportunities they need to thrive. For example, a socialist healthcare system could provide universal coverage for all Americans, regardless of their income or employment status, while also reducing the cost of healthcare overall by eliminating the profit motive of private insurance companies.

Another benefit of socialism is that it can help address systemic racism and other forms of oppression. In a capitalist system, wealth and power are often concentrated in the hands of a few, perpetuating systemic inequalities based on race, gender and other factors. By contrast, so-

cialism emphasizes the idea of collective ownership and decision-making, which can help empower marginalized communities and promote greater social and economic equality.

Of course, socialism is not the end-all-be-all solution to the problems plaguing the U.S., and there are legitimate concerns about how it would be implemented in practice. Some worry that a socialist system could lead to government overreach and a loss of individual freedom, while others argue that it could stifle innovation and entrepreneurship. These concerns should be taken seriously and addressed through careful planning and implementation of socialist policies.

In conclusion, socialism offers a promising alternative to the individualistic, market-based approach that has dominated American politics for the past few decades. By emphasizing collective ownership, social justice and equality, socialism can help address many of the social and economic problems facing the United States today. While socialism is not without its challenges and drawbacks, it is a worthwhile and necessary conversation for us to have as we work towards building a more just and equitable society.

## “I’ll put that in my memoir”

BY HARRY GLICKLIN  
LAYOUT EDITOR

I fell in love with reading again after reading a memoir. I was drawn to the ways that the metaphorical curtain of celebrity was drawn back to reveal more insight and personal perspectives on their life, and the stories that made the author who they are today.

In studying memoirs academically, both in high school and college, it became clear to me that I had only one dream in life—to write a memoir of my own. However, I struggled immediately with not feeling worthy enough to write one that would be interesting. I didn’t feel that I had extremely impactful or inspiring moments in my life that unknown audiences would desire to read, nor am I a celebrity whose life story is wanted by the fans who’ve built parasocial relationships with me. For those reasons, I decided that this moment wasn’t the right time, and rather opted to wait until I had enough anecdotes built up in order to produce a successful piece of literature.

Every moment of my life that either occurred or has yet to occur falls into one of two categories: memoir-worthy or not memoir-worthy. It’s sort of become my catch phrase to signify these moments in

real-time, saying “I’ll put that in my memoir one day.” Some examples of memoir-worthy pieces include:

1. My nickname when I did karate was “Giggles,” whereas others were given “Firecracker,” or “Avenger.” I naturally laugh when I get nervous, and was called this due to my consistent laughter during our simulated fights. My peers, however, were commended on their strength, agility or speed.

2. I have always struggled to connect with fantastical fiction, and in some ways my own imagination. It’s for this reason that I’ve never read or seen Harry Potter, Star Wars or Percy Jackson (sorry!). There’s some sort of block for me between what’s real and what’s imaginary that makes some of these concepts too complex and unrealistic for me to enjoy.

3. Due to my name being Harry, I am often compared to other pop culture figures with the same name. Harry Styles, Prince Harry and the aforementioned Harry Potter have all ebbed and flowed in tandem with their respective popularity and relevance. I look into these comparisons and wonder what kind of implicit connections can be made between us, and whether or not I find myself forcing these similarities.

The deeper, more meaningful mo-

ments are what end up in this category. What remains is every other aspect of my life. However, none of these started as extremely impactful or difficult times, but rather events and situations that have formed new meanings as I’ve grown older. The karate story happened around age 11, I tried reading Harry Potter and gave up around the same time, and the name comparisons have happened for practically all of my 18 years. But what’s remembered is what creates importance.

I use this ideology often—that if I don’t remember something, it wasn’t that important to begin with. While I don’t advocate for this tactic, it has proven helpful in thinking back on my life. Realizing and remembering these moments as an adult is what labels them as memoir-worthy.

And over winter break, I did it. I tried to write this pretend memoir that I knew in its initial form wouldn’t amount to anything, but was a great way to tackle my ambition, and ensure that I had documentation of these important moments. Spoiler alert: the three examples above are essentially all I was able to write (that I’m ready to share at least).

The writing process was rougher than I expected. Reliving these experiences was more real than I was ready for. It was as much of an unpacking as it was a retelling.

The few-page-long Google doc was like the diary I never had. And it was almost therapeutic to go back and recognize my experiences, and now I have the knowledge and understanding of writing to put these emotions into words.

My memoir remains unwritten, and may never see the light of day, or at least not until I think it’s worthy of readership. As an 18-year-old college student, much of the content of my memoir has yet to be created—those life moments haven’t even happened yet. But give me a few years, and you might just see a big book with my face on it in a Barnes & Noble near you.



PHOTO COURTESY OF HARRY GLICKLIN '26

Baby Picture of Harry Glicklin '26





# To Grant Forgiveness

By CARINA FILEMYR  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

If it’s in vain  
If it’s to wrap myself up  
In silky space robes and raise my fat little fists  
If it’s pissing in bushes  
Or watering sprigs stuffed in boxer briefs  
If it’s lying between cacti  
And dreaming of drinking the bubbles  
Out of ancient fountains  
If it’s to surrender to last kisses  
To mature endings  
To joints in skinny jeans//grape rolling paper & size 2’s  
To air that smells like rot and  
Scuffed sunshine and  
Tar so fresh your handprint could  
Reach  
right  
through

If it’s to guzzle ash and be sated by petrol  
Is it true, Frost,  
That nothing gold can stay?  
Like the chug of faucet  
Like the breaking of bread  
Like the deconstruction  
As presupposition of sand  
castle

Horseshoe crabs have antiquated and blue  
Dinosaur sex  
Next to adulterous kings and betrothed queens and  
The quiet lap of ruthless crests  
I watch them, sometimes  
A sick voyeur, a twisted pervert  
Sometimes bird shit smattered on windshields  
Looks like horseshoe crabs  
Stretched and teased and sophisticated  
Spiny tails and jagged shells

Carved by the run of berry and seed  
I won’t turn on my wipers yet, so  
Enjoy your collisions and ephemerality  
And I will play god  
If it’s to be so observant—to watch and loathe—  
Only occasionally merciful

# Untitled

By DESIREE OLIVER  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I’m trying this new thing where I am confident in the things I do. A concept that comes so easily to people who don’t look like me, a concept that everyone seems to get except for me, a concept that was so far from being a possibility that when the idea finally made its way to me I actually thought that it was revolutionary.  
My Fat, Black Body. I know that’s hard for some of you to hear.  
My Fat, Black Body  
She breathes for me  
Feeds me  
Sleeps for me  
Takes me to the rehearsals where you don’t want me.  
Wakes me  
Loves me  
Listens to me  
Takes care of me  
She knows me.  
She knows what fulfills my soul which is why she keeps bringing me.

But,  
She also knows that she holds me back from my true capability

I hate my Fat, Black Body  
She has prevented me from getting the roles I deserve because how could I play the love interest when I look like I could beat my scene partner up  
She has prevented me from wearing the clothes I want because god forbid someone sees my dark inner thighs or notices I am fat  
She has prevented me from dancing the way I want to dance because I just might jiggle a bit too much  
This Fat, Black Body has forced me into a box  
Has told me I will always play the mom, the maid, the man  
Has told me there is nothing about me to proud of  
that confidence is not meant for me

My Fat, Black Body tries to make me happy  
She works so hard  
Taking on the work that no one else will  
Stretching her Fat Black Body so thin that she no longer has the curves she is known for, her strength that you all admire so much, or her...  
Oh  
Would you look at that  
She has stretched herself so thin that she finally fits your size 2 requirement  
Now you can hear my voice? my screams?  
Now I can be seen  
Now I am worth your time and energy because  
Now you can not do this without me

So!  
I am trying this new thing where I am confident in the things I do because I can no longer live this way. I have been tricked into believing that my body and I were enemies, foes, fundamentally pitted against one another when it was always me who couldn’t stand being next to her. I am turning my hate into love. I am a fantastic dancer, I play an amazing love interest, I love going out, and my Fat Black Ass looks real good in a mini skirt.

*Tiny horoscopes for a tiny campus*

## MICRO-ASTROLOGY

*Weekly advice and predictions*

Communicated to The Weekly staff by Victor’s Lament

**Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)**  
Fully breathe. Go outside, look at some birds or something.

**Pisces (February 19 – March 20)**  
Go to a movie theater, buy popcorn, and then leave without actually seeing a movie. The rules are made up anyway.

**Aries (March 21 – April 19)**  
Waffle House wishes it could be as chaotic as you. Keep up the good work.

**Taurus (April 20 – May 20)**  
Maybe air on the side of saying outside thoughts in your head, instead of inside thoughts out loud.

**Gemini (May 21 – June 20)**  
Sometimes all you can do is your best, or at least your not-worst.

**Cancer (June 21 – July 22)**  
You’re going to forget to put a tide pod

in your laundry this week, and then try and gaslight yourself into thinking it’s still clean. It’s not, but who else is gonna know?

**Leo (July 23 – August 22)**  
You will come very close to becoming an investment bro. Escape it at all costs.

**Virgo (August 23 – September 22)**  
Life is a performance and everyone is an actor. Throw tomatoes at the ones you don’t like.

**Libra (September 23 – October 22)**  
Have you tried looking dramatically out the window about it?

**Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)**  
No, it’s not a sign. It’s just nice out and you’re romanticizing your life extra hard this week.

**Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)**  
One of you was definitely involved in the fire in Dhall this week, and the rest of you would have been if you had the opportunity. Just don’t do it on Pizza Rustica day, ok?

**Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)**  
Studies show that getting eight hours of sleep the night before an exam is more effective than cramming, but you aren’t doing either of those so carry on I guess.



# Next-door neighbor clash

Local Allentown high schools William Allen and Louis E. Dieruff pitted their baseball teams against one another in celebration of Jackie Robinson

By EVAN SCHLOTTERBECK  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

Any young baseball player spends their nights dreaming about what it would be like to play in a professional ballpark while hearing their names presented over the loudspeakers. On Tuesday, Apr. 11, members of the William Allen and Louis E. Dieruff high school baseball teams had the chance to make those dreams a reality.

The first pitch was at 3:00 p.m. on a warm, bluebird sky day in Coca-Cola Park, home of the Philadelphia Phillies Triple-A affiliate Lehigh Valley IronPigs. That (ceremonial) pitch was thrown out by the Allentown mayor Matt Tuerk, a powerful symbol of support to these young men from the leader of their city. This conference matchup ended 4-2 in favor of William Allen but was extremely competitive through all seven innings. It was clear that a high level of preparation and organization went into both teams' game plans for this afternoon's ballgame.

What made the game even more special was that it was played in honor of Jackie Robinson Day, celebrated officially on Apr. 15. Robinson, the first Black person to play in the major leagues during the modern era, is a symbol of inclusivity, strength in the face of extreme adversity and a vehicle for equality across the world of athletics. For these local young men to be able to play a game in a minor league stadium while recognizing one of the most iconic figures in sports is a cherishable moment for the athletes, friends, families and high schools they attend.

William Allen, the home team for this neutral site contest, started junior Ben Moretz on the mound. While he took a few batters to settle in, when Moretz found his groove he was lights out. He gave up two baserunners in the first inning, making it seem like it could be a long afternoon for the Canaries' pitcher, but when he ended the second inning by freezing a Dieruff batter for a strikeout looking, the poise and moxie expelling from the mound was a joy to watch.

William Allen had a few other standout players as part of the 2024 class. Starting third baseman Trevor Golden had a nice outing, making clean contact at the plate



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MORNING CALL

Allentown high schools go head to head in Jackie Robinson showcase.

and flashing the glove on multiple occasions to keep Dieruff at bay. Allen catcher Aaron Schnieder was also rock solid behind the plate, commanding his pitchers for all seven innings while contributing gritty, multiple-pitch at-bats.

It was a sight to see these student-athletes emerge from minor league quality dugouts each inning with music blasting from the rafters. Dieruff even brought their pep band to the ballpark, a memorable aspect of a game full of emotion and pride from all involved in the contest, from players to coaches to fans. Knowing the amount of commitment and sacrifice it takes to participate in any high school sport and having it be rewarded in such a way for these local ballplayers shows any onlooker the exceptional, organic influ-

ence sport has on people of all ages.

As the names of the players audibly engrossed the stadium as each player made their short journey to the plate before an at-bat, the game, literally and figuratively, stood still for a moment. Youth sports have never been about the results. It has been and should always be about the development of children into mature, respectful, compassionate and kind young adults who, through being a part of a team and competing with other players, have learned valuable life lessons that will resonate with them throughout their lives.

This commemorative meeting of two local Allentown high schools at a minor league ballpark was exemplary of the characteristics that make youth sports special and it was right in our backyard!

As students immerse themselves in the final few weeks of their spring seasons here at Muhlenberg, it might be beneficial to take a step back and recognize where their passion and excitement derived from.



# MEN'S LACROSSE

## Muhlenberg men's lacrosse going after playoffs

BY LEXI SIPOS  
STAFF WRITER

Muhlenberg men's lacrosse showed up for a fight on Saturday night against Gettysburg College and celebrated their 16 seniors. The two nationally ranked teams came out to win, but in the end, Muhlenberg lost 15-13. While Gettysburg is the ninth-ranked team and Muhlenberg is ranked nineteenth, their hard work was not reflected in their rankings.

The competitive energy was high on and off the field. Goalie Max May '23 commented, "I think we match up well with them. Unfortunately, the game didn't go as we wanted it to; however, we hope to play them again in the conference playoffs." As the Mules prepare to possibly play them in the playoffs, they are making sure to focus on the next game and not just the big picture. Their goal is "finishing out the season strong," said Dominick Visintin '23.

Muhlenberg and Gettysburg have a deep-seeded rivalry, given each of the schools can be referred to as the "berg." Still, the Mules are turning this loss into motivation. Jack Kraemer '23 comment-

ed, "Gettysburg ended our season a year ago and this result definitely hurt but will only motivate us to beat them more if we see them again." This loss does not define the Muhlenberg men's lacrosse team as they are emphasizing the positives surrounding their competitive game. Visintin '23 said, "Max May ['23] played a great game, and James Dalimonte ['23] shot the ball really well." Mainly, the boys are looking forward to the rest of the season's competition because they are consistently working toward a common goal-playoffs.

An additional characteristic of this team is composure. Not only do they attack their season game by game, but they divide the game into four components. Kraemer '23 said, "We constantly talk about putting together all 4 quarters of a game." This mindset embodies their organization and calmness under pressure. Nonetheless, they are more than prepared to take on Gettysburg again, or any team that they may face on the road to the playoffs.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS DEPT AND THE MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Men's lacrosse celebrates senior night.

# WOMEN'S LACROSSE

## Women's lax defeats the Red Devils

A tenacious finish from a veteran shooter and a green goalie.

BY MATTHEW BAKER-GRUNZA  
SPORTS EDITOR

On Apr. 15 the Muhlenberg women's lacrosse team was looking forward to their matchup against the Dickinson Red Devils. Up to this point, the two teams had been tied in their standing in the Centennial Conference and this game would decide who would be in tournament contention with a 2-3 record and who would be going home 1-4.

The game was a back-and-forth match with the Red Devils taking an early lead in the first quarter but not before the Mules dragged them back to a 5-3 deficit going into the second. Then in the second quarter, the Mules brought the firepower, scoring an impressive seven goals in 15 minutes to put them ahead by one at the end of the half.

So far the teams had gone back and forth by capitalizing on each other's strengths and weaknesses. While the Mules dominated ground ball control, they struggled to win draws. Except draws were no matter, the Mules forced 20 Red Devil turnovers. This tumultuous stat line balanced out in the score line of the second half as the two teams were tied late into the fourth.

It's important to acknowledge the es-

sential role that Meaghan Haughney '26 played in her first career start. Under pressure, she fought to save 5 goals that could have put Dickinson ahead in the final minutes. With two and a half minutes left, Haughney capably saved and cleared the ball to give the Mules momentum. The momentum that Nicole Steiner '23 capitalized on with her 80th career goal in the final minute, put the Mules up 16-15.

Elisabeth Loiselle '24 said, "We were all hungry for a win after falling to both Haverford and Washington College, so we put a lot of effort into preparing for this game. The focus and energy we carried throughout the week were contagious and came out on Saturday, both on and off the field. Beating Dickinson was crucial to keeping our team in the run for playoffs, so it felt great to walk away with such a thrilling victory and knowing we are one step closer to achieving that goal."



PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERG ATHLETICS DEPT AND THE MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Meaghan Haughney '26 stands proud after five saves.



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## Welcome Coach Kathy Prescott

The sixth coach in ‘Berg women’s soccer history is here

By MATTHEW BAKER-GRUNZA  
SPORTS EDITOR

Spring has sprung. The new turf is down. Courses for the fall are out. Theater and dance have selected their productions for next year’s season. Off-season training is intensifying for athletes. Around campus, there is new life and hope for the future. The perfect time for a new Women’s soccer head coach. Muhlenberg, it is time to swing open those red doors and welcomes Coach Kathy Prescott.

Since before she could remember, Prescott has been playing soccer. “I started playing young, my dad was my coach when I was little. Everyone in my town played, we all played together,” said Prescott. In the years following, she would continue to play soccer with her father, but her competitive spirit could not be contained as she competed in basketball and even served a few aces out on the tennis courts.

While on the pitch, Prescott switched between playing on the field and playing in the net. It wasn’t until she was 12 or 13 that she had her first run-in with Destiny. “I remember the point when I made the transition from field player to goalkeeper full-time. We were in a penalty kick shootout and after we won in penalty kicks I realized I wanted to play goalkeeper full-time.”

It was this transition to playing full-time that helped to make Prescott into the coach she is today. In her time coaching, she noticed that “a lot of my best friends who are coaches were goalkeepers.” The experience of coaching has been a lot about learning where the buck stops. “As a goalkeeper, you see the whole field, you are constantly communicating, you are managing the players in front of you. I think it gives you a little bit of empathy and maybe understanding because you are that last line of defense and you know what the pressure feels like.” Despite the ups and downs, Prescott says “It was a pretty fun career.”

Prescott’s capacity for empathy was



Kathy Prescott returns to the Centennial Conference as head coach of the women’s soccer team.

only compounded by her experience as a goalkeeper an hour east from academic row, at Haverford College. For her, college taught her about the variety of highs and lows that a student-athlete can experience. “[I] didn’t play much my freshman year, started to play more my sophomore year, was starting goalkeeper my junior year, ended up getting injured that year, came back my senior [year], and was all-conference goal keeper that year.”

After that incredible all-conference season when she set the school record for goals against with .60 per game, she stayed in the area and was an assistant coach for Bryn Mawr College; and as if a job isn’t enough work Prescott continued her education, receiving her masters in sports business with a concentration in sports analytics from Temple University.

From there, Prescott continued to bring her fearless attitude with her to each and every program she coached from her time at the University of Pennsylvania to Fordham University to most re-

cently in the hinterlands at the University of Wyoming. No matter where she went, she knew she wanted to return home to the Centennial Conference as a Head Coach. So when the position at Muhlenberg opened up, “it felt like the right fit because I knew the area, I knew the conference and I wanted to be in a high-academic place where the student-athlete experience was really important,” said Prescott.

Within a week of receiving the offer to come coach at ‘Berg, Prescott flew her can-do attitude all the way from Wyoming to hold practice in Scotty Wood Stadium. As she looks forward to the upcoming season with the expectation of winning games she is certain in her mission. “I want our Muhlenberg women’s soccer players to love coming to practice, I want them to enjoy being part of the team, I want them to be a proud part of the team, and I think such an important part of the student-athlete experience is balancing academics. First and foremost they are

here for the academics that Muhlenberg provides, so giving them the space to do all the other things they want to do while still being successful on the field.”

Prescott’s attitude towards a new challenge and her goals for the women that will walk out on that new turf field in the fall are demonstrations of what makes her a Mule. Leader and center back Olivia Oberman ‘24 said, “The team is extremely excited and grateful to welcome Coach Prescott to the women’s soccer family. After accepting the position, she flew out here right away to finish up our spring season with us and to start building relationships, which we appreciated so much. Her coaching experiences at the highest levels, true understanding of the division three athlete, contagious passion for coaching, and eagerness to promote Muhlenberg proudly are just a few clear indicators of this program’s future successes under her leadership.”

Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Apr. 20 - Apr. 26

### Softball



Thurs, Apr. 20 @ 3:00 p.m.  
Cedarcreek Field

### Baseball



Fri, Apr. 21 @ 3:30 p.m.  
Cedarcreek Field

### Women’s Tennis



Sat, Apr. 22 @ 10:00 a.m.  
Kern Field Courts

### Women’s Lacrosse



Wed, Apr. 26 @ 4:00 p.m.  
Scotty Wood Stadium



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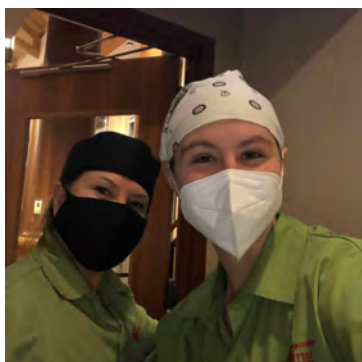
### NEWS

Commuter students' needs brought to light.  
**read more on page 3**



### ARTS & CULTURE

Muhlenberg's first renaissance faire.  
**read more on page 6**



### OP/ED

Claire Spenard '23 discusses working in dining services as a 'Berg student.  
**read more on page 8**



### SPORTS

Women's lacrosse is "all gas, no breaks."  
**read more on page 11**

## A colorful evening to celebrate Holi

*read on page 5*



PHOTO COURTESY OF SABEEN SAIFI '25

## Nour Yousry '23 to serve as 2023 commencement speaker

By SHINAM HUSSAIN  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

As the academic year comes to an end, preparations for the upcoming graduation have begun. This includes the selection of the 2023 commencement student speaker. The selected student speaker for the 2023 undergraduate class is Nour Yousry '23.

"I am deeply humbled by this opportunity to serve as the class of 2023 student commencement speaker," said Yousry.

Yousry has been heavily involved in the campus community through her time at Muhlenberg. She has served as an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Captain, a Resident Advisor (RA), the co-president of the Muslim Students Association (MSA), the co-founder and co-president of the Hebrew Arabic Buddies Interfaith Berg Initiative (HABIBI), campus tour guide and a campus delegate, to name just a few.

With her appointment as speaker, Yousry was able to speak about what this opportunity means to her, and how honored she is to be selected to speak for the class of 2023. "I am beyond humbled [by] this opportunity. I recognize that the class of 2023 is showered with lots of accomplishments, and lots of light. The class of 2023 is so accomplished and so talented, and an inspiration to me personally. I just feel so honored to be given the opportunity to address

the class of 2023. But that being said, I am just as excited to celebrate everyone's accomplishments as well."

"I applied for the position [of speaker] because I am so proud of my peers," added Yousry. "I am so excited to celebrate everyone's accomplishments and everyone's next steps. On commencement day, I want to recognize all the work our class year has accomplished, and recognize the highs and lows of our journey. Our class experienced the global pandemic in our freshman year, and a lot of abrupt changes we were not expecting. But at the same time, our class was very dedicated and resilient through these years, and has shown accomplishment and has shown success through all the trials and tribulations."

Yousry was able to provide insight on her decision to apply, the selection process this year and how it was slightly different than years prior. "There was a very specific process. We submit our speeches, they are anonymized, the selection committee hosts student interviews and then those student names that go through the second tier, go into a ballot where the class of 2023 is able to vote. That is how it's always been traditionally, and that is the impression I was under when I applied to be speaker," said Yousry.

The process for selecting the student speaker requires interested students to submit a draft of their speech to a selec-

tion committee. From there, the names and identities of the students are removed from the speeches before they are inspected by the selection committee. Then, the committee spends time reviewing and assessing the submitted speeches, and from here, in previous years, the committee would narrow the submissions down to a small number of finalists. These finalists would then have their names and a brief bio of them sent out to the graduating class, where the graduating class would get the opportunity to vote on the final selected speaker.

This year, while applicants were informed that the process would remain the same, when it came to final selection the process was changed without informing the applicants and the graduating class. The final student speaker was chosen by the selection committee, removing the aspect of the class vote.

When asked about the change in selection policy this year, the Director of Student Organizations, Leadership, and Engagement (S.O.L.E) Ellen Lentine stated, "The College does not have a formal policy in place for determining the Senior Commencement Speaker. The Senior Commencement Speaker Selection Committee is responsible for reviewing applications and recommending the best course of action for selection."

Lentine continued, "Year after year, the committee received consistent feedback from the

senior class that the voting process felt inequitable to students. Students voiced concern that the process diminished the academic and collegial integrity of the occasion to nothing more than a 'popularity contest.'"

"Considering the feedback, and with no firm policy in place, the committee agreed that given the occasion and honor of delivering a commencement speech, the best course of action was to make a selection grounded in the quality and content of the speech. This seemed like the most equitable approach and was a reasonable charge for this committee," said Lentine.

Lentine informed The Weekly that the selection process was extensive and the candidate chosen submitted a compelling and strong speech, and through their speech, the committee was able to see the chosen speaker to be a deserving and representative speaker for the graduating class.

"I recognize that the student commencement speaker is not



PHOTO COURTESY OF NOUR YOUSRY '23



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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We request that advertising material be submitted by the Monday preceding publication at 5 p.m. If materials have not been received at that time, the advertisement will not run and the advertiser is still responsible for 100% payment. We reserve the right to decline any advertisement that is misleading, inaccurate, fraudulent, or deemed generally unacceptable. This determination will be made by the Business Staff in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief. The Muhlenberg Weekly maintains a distinction between its news & editorial content and advertising. As such, advertisements will not be accepted if they imitate the general style of The Weekly, intentionally or unintentionally. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: headlines, bylines, fonts, and column-arrangements. In order to make this distinction, The Weekly also reserves the right to include the word "advertisement" on any advertisement that is deemed too native.

# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

## 4/17/23

Vandalism—Damage found to toilet paper dispenser at Martin Luther Hall, no suspects at this time.

Fire Alarm—Report of fire alarm at Seegers Union, upon arrival smoke could be observed from possible wiring issue, Allentown Fire Department responded, Plant Operations responded and corrected problem.

## 4/18/23

Traffic—Motor vehicle accident causing damage to bumper, parties to exchange information.

Odor—Report of smell of cannabis at Brown Hall, upon arrival nothing could be noted

## 4/19/23

Medical—Report to transport student to hospital at LSC.

Theft— Report of theft of food in Seegers, investigation to continue.

Suspicious Person— Report of suspicious persons talking to students in Trexler Library, upon arrival no one was around.

## 4/21/23

Medical—Report of injured student at Prosser Hall, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, Allentown EMS transported student to hospital.

Medical—Report of injured student at 2201 Chew Street, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, Allentown EMS transported student to hospital.

## 4/22/23

Disorderly Conduct—Report of individuals urinating outside at off-campus location, upon arrival no one was around.

# 2023 Commencement Luncheon



*Immediately following commencement ceremonies, graduates, families and guests are invited to attend an all-you-care-to-eat buffet luncheon in the Wood Dining Commons.*

Tickets:



*M* Muhlenberg College  
Dining



# New project addresses the needs of commuter students

BY KATHERINE CONLON  
MANAGING EDITOR

Unlike some of its neighboring institutions, Muhlenberg College is not known for having a large population of commuter students. With a little more than 1,800 undergraduates attending the College, only 103 of them commute from home to class. In order to be allowed to commute, students must reside with their parents or guardians within a 30-mile radius of Muhlenberg. One commuter, Vivian Jaber '24, noticed a lack of attention given to this student group and decided to create a peer education project for her Organizational and Leadership/Peer Education class.

Jaber explained the nature of her project saying, "For my project I'm focusing on allocating more resources to commuter students on campus." The project consisted of Jaber sending out a survey to commuters in order to "get a sense of what resources they'd like to have, how the College can better fulfill their needs, and if there are any issues they'd like to have addressed. Looking at the survey results, the majority of those who filled it [out] wished that there was a commuter lounge with a microwave and minifridge so they can have a place to relax in between classes, heat up or store their food,

charge their computers and phones and store their belongings."

Another primary issue that arose from Jaber's research was the lack of parking on campus available for commuter students' use. "A lot of commuters have the same common issue: parking. Commuters pay for the parking sticker, but are not always guaranteed a spot. Campo tickets students often. The circle can't be utilized as student parking. The Fahy Commons' parking spots are for faculty only," noted Jaber.

Jaber worked in conjunction with Director of Student Transitions and Family Programs Tim Black in coordinating this project. Black commented on his involvement in the project saying, "[Jaber] came to me at the beginning of the semester and I was on board because, in my new role, this was an area the College was already starting to explore. Vivian's survey and the results have reinforced the need to further enhance the commuter experience. The suggestions that she has put forth, as a result, will significantly benefit commuter students. We have some plans in the works to provide temporary solutions while also continuing to expand to permanent solutions as well."

Current Student Government Association (SGA) President Ben Eber '23 ex-

pressed his support for increased resource allocation for commuter students saying, "I think a commuter lounge is an incredibly reasonable request and a very doable project. The lounge should include a microwave and fridge, couches, storage space; a space to provide the comforts of home. A commuter parking lot, in an ideal world, would also be great. More than just providing commuters with material space, SGA can work with clubs to make event times and locations more accessible to commuters, not only so they don't have to drive in the middle of the night, but also to increase their connection to outside-of-class campus life. A commuter club is a unique idea that was brought up and would help them partner with other groups to see this through. This club would also be able to receive funding from SGA if they have their own events."

As a recently elected representative for the SGA, Jaber plans to serve as a voice for commuter students. On why she ran for the position Jaber explained that "I ran because I realized that there is no commuter representative on SGA while I was doing this project and there should be so I applied for the position."

Jaber also noted that President-elect Jake Forstein '24 has expressed interest in creating an ad hoc committee that she

would lead in order to prioritize commuter-related concerns. Forstein stated "I plan to set up a committee within the first few weeks of the semester, working with Vivian (likely having her as the ad-hoc chair). The goals of the ad-hoc will be focused on providing more resources to commuter students, such as a commuter lounge, more commuter parking and a resource similar to the RA role."

Jaber is not the only commuter with these concerns. Amanda Sodl '23 expressed her opinion saying, "oftentimes as a commuter it feels like I have nowhere to go in between classes or if I'm waiting for something. Anyone else can just go back to their room or to their 'usual' place since they spend significantly more time on campus, but as a commuter it's often hard to find somewhere to go where you don't feel out of place." Sodl continued stating "I know Vivian has been working on her commuter project and issued a survey about a month ago, but it shouldn't be up to a student to gather that data. The College in general should recognize that commuters face issues that residential students don't and they should send out surveys at least once an academic year, maybe even once a semester, to see what the most pressing issues are and try to come up with ways to solve them."

## Earth Day becomes Earth Month

BY SAMANTHA TEMPKIN  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Muhlenberg's Environmental Action Team, or enACT, is back for another year of celebrating Earth Day with an extensive list of events throughout the month of April to engage the campus community while promoting care for the environment.

The student-run environmental advocacy group is bringing back new iterations of events from previous years and initiating new ones with an emphasis on collaboration and community. Events that have been repeated from last year include the clothing swap, chalking and Earth Shabbat. EnACT board member Harli Strauss-Cohn '24 said, "Everything else was new to this year. Even those events had a new twist to them—clothing swap was outside, chalking is going to have music with ATR [A-Town Records] and the conversations that happened at Earth Shabbat were made uniquely for this year. We strive to be changing, growing and adapting throughout all our planning processes and events we do."

Board members of enACT conducted weekly meetings to discuss plans and future projects to inform the initiatives that would be a part of Earth Month this year. "We urge people that if they have a passion project they want to bring to life, we are a platform that can make that

stuff happen. We definitely do not want the board to be making all different kinds of decisions in that way. There's lots and lots and lots of opportunities for engagement and participation," said enACT board member Maddie Davidson '25.

On Earth Day itself, festivities began in the morning with student-led yoga, on the College Green conducted by enACT and the Outdoors Club and led by Madeline de la Parra '23. The organization then orchestrated a trip to Allentown's Earth Day in the Park celebration filled with activities, games, vendors and educational experiences all encouraging environmental awareness. Davidson reflected on the experience saying, "It was a really great opportunity to get involved in the community and learn from people. I made a bunch of connections while I was there talking with different people involved in advocacy and education."

Strauss-Cohn highlighted the importance of collaboration in environmental advocacy saying, "We are stronger together and brought to expand more than if we were siloed off. It is really important for us to also collaborate with/be a part of/support the environmental efforts of the greater Allentown community as most of us are mere passersby here in the grand scheme of things." EnACT's focus on collaborating with other organizations is apparent through various Earth Month events. For instance, the Muhlenberg Ac-

tivities Council (MAC) helped out with enACT's chalking event on Apr. 21 by giving away reusable straws at the same time to increase attendance. Other collaborators included ATR, who provided live music during the chalking event, as well as Hillel and the Student Government Association (SGA), who helped establish the new journaling stations and free libraries throughout campus. Strauss-Cohn also pointed out how, "Promise Neighborhoods of the Lehigh Valley hosted a guest speaker here, Ruth Santiago, who spoke about the importance of a renewable energy transition led by community in Puerto Rico in the face of international aid efforts that keep trying to rebuild broken systems that leave people without power for months on end."

EnACT will also be collaborating with other organizations for their main event of the month, EcoFest, which has been moved to Arbor Day rather than Earth Day to align with Muhlenberg's 175th Anniversary Celebration. The event will include vendors from the Allentown community that will be tabling, selling products and spreading the word about their initiatives. EcoFest will also include student vendors and performances from student-run ensembles. "If [EcoFest] sparks an idea and you want to contribute to the community, contribute to your relationship with the planet in some special kind of way, that could be a great opportunity

to find something and make that bridge, make those connections," says Davidson. Ecofest is on Apr. 28 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the College Green.

By turning Earth Day into Earth Month, the student-run environment advocacy group hopes to emphasize the importance of protecting the planet in an inclusive, enjoyable way. Strauss-Cohn says, "In expanding Earth Day out into Earth Month, we hope to exemplify the importance and need to care and act for the earth each and every day of the entire year, really. EnACT hopes you have enjoyed the Earth Month events and will continue loving, appreciating and being in the earth far past [April]."



PHOTO BY MADDIE DAVIDSON '25

EnAct painting journaling stations on Earth Day.



# The College becomes target of cyberattack

BY MATTHEW BARESH  
NEWS EDITOR

On Monday, Mar. 27, students and faculty reported issues with internet connectivity on campus. Students could be heard discussing the issue throughout the day, often complaining about the irregular internet connection. "I was annoyed because I had a lot of work to do online that day and the Wi-Fi kept cutting in and out, no matter where you were on campus," explained Josh Botel '25.

The cause was unknown until an email was sent explaining the situation. At approximately 2 a.m. on Mar. 27, the College became a target of a serious network attack that was initially prevented by the College's firewall and internet service provider (ISP). Later that morning at 8 a.m., the volume of the attack increased drastically, and internet access was unavailable campus-wide. This attack was later mitigated via ISP and other vendors two hours later.

"[At] around 10 a.m., we identified the type of network attack (Distributed Denial Of Service known as DDOS) and implemented some countermeasures to restore internet and network services," explained José Dieudonné, chief information officer at the College. "At around 4 p.m. the attack escalated in severity again. At one point more than 50,000 computers

around the world were involved in the attack, continuously sending malicious traffic (over 850,000 sessions/second) to the College."

Later at 6 p.m., the College began to engage with other network protection services to counter this specific type of attack. These services aided in restoring internet connection at midnight after what was described as a "rather expensive, sophisticated and difficult to mitigate" cyberattack, according to Dieudonné. "In the last two weeks Health and Human Services, FBI and various state agencies have reported other institutions, mainly healthcare, being targeted by this specific type of attack."

Dieudonné explained the various measures taken to combat the attack. "We partnered with Cloudflare, a cloud based leader in network attack protection services. We were able to restore full internet services at around 12:45 a.m. on Tuesday."

Individuals across campus had different experiences with the lack of internet connection throughout the day.

Giovanna Evans '25 said "I wasn't really impacted by the lack of connection during the day. I just didn't have Wi-Fi for three hours and decided to watch TV during that time until the Wi-Fi was restored. After that I was able to do my homework so I was fairly unbothered by the whole

situation."

"I was more frustrated than anything," shared Caleb Wakefield '25. "When the internet went down my teachers were unable to use presentations and things like that. This also kept me and other students from doing our assignments online. I was lucky enough to have a hotspot, but at the same time, I couldn't listen to music for the whole day. At some point, you get used to things like this because of how bad Muhlenberg's Wi-Fi is. At first I just thought it was another typical day of bad Wi-Fi and I didn't think anything of it until they sent out the email later that day."

Following the cyberattack, Dieudonné gave precautionary measures for students to stay vigilant while using the internet. He recommends that students "secure devices, use strong passwords, perform computer updates regularly, use multifactor authentication, install good antivirus software and don't give out personal information." Additionally, all

cybersecurity incidents should be immediately reported to the Office of Information Technology (OIT) so the staff can respond appropriately.

The word "cyberattack" comes with a certain sense of confusion and seriousness. With the constant advancement of technology, privacy concerns become more pressing as these attacks occur on a global scale. Luckily for Muhlenberg, "There is no evidence to suggest that any College data or systems were compromised during the attack," said Dieudonné. "We take the duty to protect employees' and students' privacy very seriously. Even when troubleshooting a crisis like that, we take every precaution to ensure that this information provided to partners and vendors is anonymized or aggregated in a way that protects our community's privacy."

## FROM COMMENCEMENT PAGE 1

someone that can consolidate all the voices into one. There are so many voices that I want to represent and empower on that day. But I also want to recognize that a single voice won't do justice to everyone's identities, accomplishments and backgrounds," noted Yousry.

When reflecting on her Muhlenberg journey, and the gratitude she feels for being selected speaker, a teary-eyed Yousry said, "I'm overcome with emotion. I came to know and get close to a lot of people I consider amazing friends, and amazing peers. And most definitely leaders of our generation. I foresee so much success for them. Being selected for commencement speaker for this upcoming commence-

ment is just a humbling blessing."

"My Muhlenberg College career has brought so much light to my life, personally. In so many different ways, but specifically for the opportunity it has brought me to work alongside such talented individuals, and to also empower myself and others to be leaders in our spaces," shared Yousry.

She added, "I wish I could do it all over again. If I relived these four years, I would choose Muhlenberg every single time."

*There has also been a Graduate and Continuing Education speaker selected, which The Weekly will be announcing next week.*

# GAR? More like ARG(H)

BY MATTHEW KLINGER  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Students have long been frustrated with the number of General Academic Requirements (GARs) they are responsible for completing during their time at Muhlenberg. Needing to complete 18 GARs in addition to majors and minors requires an incredible amount of mental and scheduling gymnastics that makes students more concerned with completing all their graduation requirements than learning. In light of these issues, Keri Colabroy, Ph.D., professor of chemistry and co-director of the biochemistry program, facilitated a conversation representing a task force to re-envision the Muhlenberg curriculum.

In a meeting with members of the Student Government Association (SGA), Colabroy stated, "The College has done some research and it shows that the curriculum is intimidating and not attractive to prospective students... we have heard about your struggles with the GARs." The new task force is currently coming up with a number of different options to replace the current GARs and is working closely with faculty to decide which option will ultimately be the best. Their goal is to streamline the GARs and increase

flexibility. While the final decision as to how and when the curriculum will be updated is still uncertain, the College is very excited about the work they are doing and believe that it will help future students thrive and prepare them for a successful future.

Students also weighed in with their thoughts on the current GAR model and how they would like to see it replaced in the future. Caleb Wakefield '25 stated "I think the amount of GARs is pretty overwhelming. I know that it is a liberal arts school so we need some science, some math [and] some performing, but it's especially difficult to get those classes in addition to getting the classes for your major. A good change would be either less GAR requirements or putting GARs in the major. For example, I am a history major and a history of science would be helpful."

SGA Recording Secretary and President-elect Jake Forstein '24 had a similar view, saying "I think right now the number of GARs is overwhelming considering it is over half of the credits we need to graduate. I also think other things that aren't GARs like PPD that don't give you any credits [don't help]. Overall I would like to see changes to that, whether that be more flexibility in terms of what counts towards a GAR or a new system entirely."

**Jay's Local**

*First Annual Neighborhood*

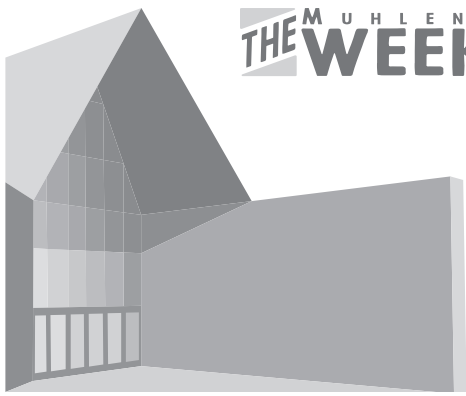
# **GARAGE SALE**

**Saturday May 6th**  
**10am-2pm**  
**at Jay's Local**

- Please RSVP to [contact@jayslocal.com](mailto:contact@jayslocal.com) by **May 1st** if you wish to be a vendor
- Tables and chairs provided by Jay's Local
- All you need to bring is your household items to sell
- There is no charge to participate in this event
- Any items that are not sold, must be taken with you at the end of the event

**Your neighbors at: 2301 W Liberty St**





"Good music comes out of people playing together, knowing what they want to do and going for it." - Keith Richards



PHOTO BY MARCO CALDERON

Local Girls takes the stage.

BY ALMARAH URMAN  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Last weekend, Muhlenberg's theatre department closed its 2022-2023 departmental season with "Local Girls," directed by Beth Schacter, Ph.D. "Local Girls" tells the story of a teenage metal band from Georgia desperate for their big break. It's a coming-of-age love story set to the tune of teenage angst and the ache to make it out of their small town.

The play brings characters together in unlikely ways. Riley, a metal guitarist, is in need of both a chemistry tutor and a screamer for her band. She finds both of those things in the socially struggling Diskit and together, the two of them discover much more.

"Being in 'Local Girls,' I learned about different characters with different lives and goals. Two young girls, passionate

about the future in such immensely different ways. It is so important to see that just because two people aren't making their way in life through the same style, they can both still make it to their goals, and respect each other's paths. Learning about these characters taught me so much about the innocence of love compared to the hard parts of love. Riley is a character who can be mean, stern and harsh to the people she cares about, [but] it is all through passion and love. Her background has caused her to put up a wall, she has her guard up in life, but still lets love in and accepts the people around her who fail and make mistakes with her," reflected Christine Norton '25, who portrayed the character of Riley.

"We are living in such difficult times, that an intimate tragicomedy focused on powerful female characters could really be uplifting. The story about the two

## The departmental season closes out with "Local Girls"

young female characters falling in love is also important for our audiences—so many lesbian narratives end with tragic conclusions, this optimistic story seemed especially compelling" remarked Schacter on why she chose the play for this season. With anti-LGBTQ+ hatred and legislation being a prominent topic in current events, telling stories about young, queer, joy is especially timely and important.

"Local Girls" demanded more from its actors than just the performance skills they already possessed. Every character either plays a musical instrument or has to death metal scream, and for two performers, this meant learning entirely new instruments. Evelyn Carlin '24 (Shanice) learned to play the drums, and faculty member Jim VanValen (Francis) learned piano. They picked up the skills impressively well.

"I was obsessed with all of the actors,

they were so incredible and really got me into the metal mood. I never considered listening to something like this before I saw the show, but the passion and enthusiasm from the performers created a performance that was legendary," commented Olivia Reiss '26.

"It was definitely a fresh production given a lot of love from both the cast, crew, and department staff. I had no idea two of the performers learned instruments just for the show and their playing was amazing! Overall, it felt very close to home and the world-building was touching," said Bell Hansen '26.

The "Local Girls" cast and team had a lot of moments from the show and the rehearsal process that helped them connect to the material.

"My favorite moment in the show is definitely when I first audition for the

SEE "LOCAL GIRLS" PAGE 7

## A colorful evening to celebrate Holi

BY SHAIYAN FEISAL  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

On Thursday, Apr. 20 at 5:00 p.m., Top Naach, Muhlenberg's South Asian affinity group, hosted their annual festival celebrating Holi at Parent's Plaza. It included an evening full of food, music, performances and colored powder. Holi is a popular Hindu festival that welcomes spring and symbolizes the triumph of good over evil. It is a celebration of spring, color and love.

Ruhani Singh '23, the current president of Top Naach discussed what Holi means to her. "Since childhood, Holi is one of the biggest festivals I have celebrated with my friends and family in India, and so having that celebration even a month later here at 'Berg makes me feel connected to my culture and reminds me of

home. This festival is quite big in different parts of South Asia and is celebrated by anyone who wishes to be a part. It is a time for friends, family [and] relatives to come together, engage in color and water play-fights and eat different kinds of food items."

Mayhem Step Team, Copacetic Rhythms, Perkulators, MINT\* and Note-worthy A Capella opened for Top Naach.

After that, Top Naach took the stage with a medley of songs. They opened with "Kajra Re," which is a flirty song from the movie "Bunty Aur Babli." They then performed "The Breakup Song," a peppy song about the aftermath of a breakup. "Pasoori/Calm Down" was a mash up between a famous Urdu song "Pasoori" and a famous Afrobeats song "Calm Down."

"Roz Roz" is a slow song about exploring and finding yourself and learning

to not depend on others. This song was special because it was also a motif for the Top Naach seniors passing off the torch to their underclassmen. "Appadi Pode - Nakka Mukka" is a South Asian classic, which is a song that is typically played at every party and is a hype song. Ruhani Singh '23, president of Top Naach, said that "one of my favorite songs to perform was 'Nakka Mukka,' just because while rehearsing it with the group we all shared so much energy and it brought joy to all of us!"

Guests were able to try a variety of Indian dishes: Chili Paneer, which is an Indian cheese made from full-fat cow or buffalo milk. Pakora, a deep fried fritter with potatoes and onions and coated in flour. Chicken 65, a spicy and deep-fried chicken dish. And a dessert known as Gulab Jamun, which translates to "rose wa-

ter berry" in English. They also served a yogurt based mango drink, mango lassi.

On the program passed out to guests, it states that "Holi is celebrated differently across the world. People eat a lot of sweets, and the entire day is filled with fun and laughter with water and color fights. Some popular foods eaten during Holi are Gujiya, Thandai Barfi and Dahi Bhalla."

Top Naach ended the dance performance with "Madhubala," a song representing the spirit of Holi and celebration. After the performance, guests were encouraged to join Top Naach on the College Green to conclude the evening with throwing and playing with colored powders.



# Hear ye, hear ye...

BY DANNY MILKIS  
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

On Sunday, Apr. 23, Myths N Mules, Muhlenberg's Dungeons & Dragons group, hosted "Jesters N Jousts," the campus's first ever Renaissance faire, in which Muhlenberg's bravest, most valorous heroes could partake in an afternoon of live music, don the apparel of their favorite fantasy characters, enjoy themed refreshments and mingle with other fantasy fans.

Renaissance faires, also known as Renaissance festivals or Renaissance fairs, are a popular type of outdoor event that seeks to recreate the atmosphere of 16th-century European life. These fairs are typically held in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom, although they have also spread to other countries in recent years. Renaissance faires are designed to be immersive experiences that

transport visitors back in time to a period of knights, lords and ladies. They typically feature costumed performers, period-accurate entertainment, artisan vendors and a wide range of food and drink options. Attendees are often encouraged to dress in period-appropriate clothing, although this is not required.

The event was held on the College Green, and featured a circular pattern of tables, with a stage in the center for live performance artists. On one of the tables, there was a selection of themed refreshments, including frosted, cone-molded cupcakes in the shape of torches.

"The faire was a wonderful community gathering," said Josh Freeman '23, an attendee. "My favorite part was definitely the fact that I could see neighbors and local folks bringing their families to participate in the fun of the day."

Live performances were held from student musicians throughout the afternoon,



PHOTO BY SPYRO COFFIN '25

Renaissance Faire festivities.

including guitarist and vocalist Matthew Robertson '23, vocalist Oy Adebajo '24, vocalist Ella Rolin '25 and more.

"Jesters N Jousts" featured art stalls, where student artists had the ability to sell and showcase their original works. Myths N Mules expressed in their ad-

vertising that 20 percent of all proceeds from vendors would be given to the Second Harvest Food Bank, a non-profit organization dedicated to a twofold mission of supplying those in need in the Lehigh Valley with sustenance and providing educational assistance and supplies to local schools.

"Jesters N Jousts was sufficiently medieval with prices no peasant could afford," said Madi Leonard '24, a faire attendee. "Inflation also affects the serfs it seems."

Emma Walter '25, the diversity, equity and inclusivity chair of Myths N Mules, said, "This has been a pipe dream of ours since our conception in 2020. It's been really cool to see how much our club has grown over the past few years, and to see the culmination of the community we've grown through Myths N Mules."

# FSL's Greek Week celebrates big and small wins

BY ALEX CABAN-ECHEVARRIA  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL)'s Greek Week kicked off on Sunday, Apr. 16 with a field day at Alumni Courts. The eight on-campus organizations competed in tug-of-war, a kickball tournament and a water balloon toss for points toward the Greek Week trophy, held in 2022 by Alpha Tau Omega (ATO) and Delta Zeta (DZ). The reigning champions held the lead after the first day, going into the Penny Wars competition, where Interfraternity Council (IFC) and Panhellenic Council (Panhel) Executive Board and chapter members tabled in Seegers Union to raise money for the Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) of the Lehigh Valley. Panhellenic President Hilary Rappaport '24 says that they chose this organization "to create a long-term relationship... We felt that their mission statement aligned with our community values."

The second day of competition ended in Canstruction, a new event where each team provided their own donations of canned goods and constructed them into sculptures for the theme, "What does Muhlenberg mean to you?" There were 1,043 cans donated to the Jewish Family Services of the Lehigh Valley, with the event following Alpha Epsilon Pi (AEPi)'s Holocaust Remembrance Day Walk. IFC President Justin Billich '24 says that "Jewish Family Services of Lehigh Valley was another one that just made sense. Knowing that Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) was during Greek Week, we wanted to do something out of respect for our Jewish community on campus."

At Greek Feud on Tuesday, Apr. 17, a "Family Feud" style trivia game feud, the competition heated up on stage in the Event Space, with Billich and Rappaport hosting seven rounds, crowning Phi



PHOTO BY MADDIE CILIENTO '25

Alpha Chi Omega during their Greek Sing performance.

Sigma Sigma (Phi Sig) the winner. ATO President Matt Van Burik '24 said: "Greek Feud this year hit us hard. On Sunday we had come first in all the athletic events so losing in the first round and not getting any points really disappointed us and hurt our morale."

The winner of Canstruction, Alpha Chi Omega (AXO), was also announced at Greek Feud, as well as the banner competition winner. This year's Greek Week theme was TV sitcoms, and each banner hung up at the letter houses with designs correlating to each chapter's TV sitcom. The winners were ATO's "The Office" and DZ's "Friends" banners.

On Wednesday, Apr. 18, another new event, Wear 'Em Wednesday, was introduced and asked chapter members to check in at the Penny Wars tables wearing their letters. Zeta Beta Tau (ZBT) and Phi Sig reached 100% of their members "wearing 'em." The week's competition ended with a corn hole tournament back at Alumni Courts, where both ATO and DZ won, going into dress rehearsals for Greek Sing the following evening.

Greek Sing is an annual award ceremony celebrating chapter accomplishments and outstanding members of FSL. The performance aspect is the highlight for

many chapters, where reigning champions Delta Tau Delta (DTD) and AXO brought storytelling and elaborate dance numbers to the stage. The ceremony was hosted by Campus Safety Officer Alexander Pantaleo. IFC and Panhel members of the year were awarded by Billich and Rappaport to Jack Younes '23 and Britney Jara '23 for their outstanding contributions to the FSL community. Younes was the 2022 IFC President and Jara was the first Panhel VP of Operations and Rho Gammas in 2022. This new position is succeeded by Sam Miley '24, who also announced the new Rho Gammas during the show.

Giving these awards was Rappaport's highlight of the week: "Greek Sing is the final event of the week, where the community comes together to celebrate our achievements and to see each chapter's performances. Justin and I were given the opportunity to lead the award ceremony. I was able to give some of my closest friends their Member of the Year awards... [I also received my] pass-down gavel, which was unexpected. This moment made me proud of my accomplishments and reminded me of how supported I am by my peers."

At the end of Greek Sing, Billich and Rappaport announced the final fundrais-

ing count, \$7,149, going to BBBS, which Associate Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life and Leadership Natalie Shaw said is her favorite part of the week. Shaw commented, "Each time we have a large event I say I couldn't be prouder and I'm always proven wrong!" Regarding the highly anticipated awards, Shaw explained, "At the end of the day, a trophy (though they may be cool) is only with the winning chapter for a short amount of time but the other parts of the week are going to be what you look back on and remember the most." The winners of the week were, ATO and DZ, and the winners of Greek Sing, DTD and AXO, were all awarded trophies. Van Burik said, "Corn hole and penny wars allowed us to bring it back and win it all. After it had ended I was very proud of my brothers and happy that we could bring that trophy home for another year."

Looking back on the week, Billich will remember the outstanding philanthropy efforts of the FSL community: "I recall checking... before I went to sleep on Wednesday, and checked again Thursday morning and saw the number increase by almost \$1,000 overnight. Our community went above and beyond." DZ President Emily Kolodney '24 explained her team's strategy: "The fundraising we did for Penny Wars is definitely what united us the most this week. We met to plan how we were going to fundraise—calling and asking family members, friends, colleagues and more. We utilized our community organizing skills to rally our people around this wonderful cause, and it totally paid off!"

Looking forward to the rest of the year, Rappaport said, "I hope that during recruitment, members will be able to reflect on this week and how the Panhellenic experience is a large part of their time in their organizations."



# Co-Lab as Muhlenberg's newest departmental production

BY AMY SWARTZ  
STAFF WRITER

The theatre department at Muhlenberg has been creating new experiences for students in the discipline. This past weekend, these new projects culminated into Co-Lab, a fully comprehensive course that Muhlenberg offered this semester. Co-Lab started in December of last year, where all three production teams had to propose what shows they wanted to put on as part of the course. In addition to the proposals, the individual production teams had to give draft ideas, costume ideas, etc. After that, their ideas could be chosen as a Co-Lab production, which was the culmination of their work in the course.

To participate in Co-Lab, students did not have to be enrolled in the actual course. All students who were enrolled in the course were a part of one of the productions.

The three final productions were “At the Heart of it All / At the End of the Line,” “...Even in Another Time,” and “Tartuffe! Kiss My Ass!” While there were no hard rules regarding who could be a part of the production, as auditions were held for any students who wanted to get involved, the one departmental show per semester per student rule still applied since Co-Lab was a departmental production.

While class time was typically delegated to the creative process that is typically behind the scenes, all actual rehearsals for the productions happened outside of the designated class times in the latter half of the semester.

Since the productions took place in Studio 22, which is not typically a space that houses final productions, it allowed for the production teams to play with the space and really make it their own. The space transformed for each production. Studio 22 as a space also did not allow for sets to be permanent until the Wednesday before the performances began. Co-Lab had invited dress on Thursday, with shows taking place from Friday through Sunday.

All three productions were vastly different from one another, leaving the audience with a unique experience of seeing three productions all with distinct



PHOTO BY LAUREN KORANDA '23

Co-lab takes the stage, presenting student adapted works.

narratives. “At the Heart of it All / At the End of the Line” details the Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, with the focus being on characters that have the spotlight stripped away from them in the original tale. “...Even in Another Time” is centered around a queer relationship between vampires that stands the testaments of the ages. “Tartuffe! Kiss My Ass!” is focused on a group of clowns and the consequences when an unknown variable becomes involved.

Though all three adaptations covered completely different subject matters, the inspiration from all three directors seemed to have a powerful connection to issues these students have found to be significant, and want to play with their surrounding narratives. Joey Marcacci '23 details the inspiration behind his piece, “Tartuffe! Kiss My Ass!” He said, “Moliere wrote Tartuffe as a commentary on religious hypocrisy taking place at the time. Inspired by his use of comedy and satire, I wanted to adapt the play to fit the current political commentary I intended to convey with the piece, while still staying true to the spirit of the original. As the original Tartuffe was intended to spark conversation about current issues and ways of thinking, I wanted to also replicate that as well with my adaptation.”

ing up turns into her first metal ‘scream,’ and the awkward sweet ways in which the two characters navigate an embarrassing event really get to me,” reflected Schacter.

“Local Girls” was an uplifting, special way to close out the theatre department season while telling important stories and amplifying underrepresented voices, quite literally with the use of the heavy metal screaming.

The show was unique for the season in many ways, but one of the most prominent ones was that it called for a faculty member to act alongside Muhlenberg students. VanValen’s inclusion in the cast brought a wonderful presence and

Brayden Stallman '23 elaborated on his personal inspiration for “...Even in Another Time,” as well as what drew him to the story itself. “This pre-Dracula vampire novella starring a female vampire and a not-so-hidden queer romance at the core of it was something that my creative partner Amelie Parcanzy [‘25] and I really fell in love with. It really spoke to what is befalling queer, trans and female bodies in America the past year. The fear of female and queer sexuality is the core of the original text and we wanted to feature that in particular.”

Bridget Wiggan '23, found that her inspiration for “At the Heart of it All / At the End of the Line” stemmed from what was lacking. “I realized how little information I was able to gather about Eurydice in the background research I conducted and that bothered me. Because of this, I decided that my version of the story would focus on what’s missing from the myth: what happens to Eurydice between her death and Orpheus bringing his wife back to the Overworld? So that’s what I explored—with the addition of three characters who don’t exist at all in the original myth: Eurydice’s sisters.”

When asked to detail their favorite parts about the entire process, Wiggan discussed “The first day of tech was hon-

warmth to the production and his talents brought out tears from many audience members.

VanValen reflected, “As a faculty member, working alongside my students as a fellow actor has been very meaningful. The creative space is also a vulnerable space. And in that space, the students have seen me try things that have failed, they have seen me struggle at times, and they have seen me make mistakes. They have seen me learn and stumble and, through it all, they have offered me support and insight from one actor to another. I think this is the space I need to be in to experience and understand more

estly my favorite part of the process, because I got to see the whole thing come together in ways that left me speechless. While I had been proud of the work I had done beforehand, that first day really helped me see just how beautiful the show I created was. Plus, I got to work with an amazing group of actors who asked questions I hadn’t thought of and made the piece into what it was. I couldn’t have done any of it without them.”

Stallman found that “The most fulfilling part of this process was being able to work with an incredible team. Bringing Amelie and Gretchen D’Amato [‘23] over from “Tick Tick Boom” with me to work together again, as well as getting to work with an amazing set of actors who were so willing to try new things and really dive into the material. A lot of our cast are not dancers and yet they were unafraid to push themselves as far as possible.”

From being a Co-Lab audience member to conversing with students involved in the productions, it is abundantly clear that Company Manager Elizabeth Vichness '25 and Visiting Assistant Professor of Theatre and Dance Nigel Semaj were beyond crucial in bringing the vision to the stage. Maracacci elaborated on just how integral Semaj was to the process, “Our incredible creative director, Nigel Semaj, supported us during the process and really helped me with the creative development of my piece. This was a course environment that I had not experienced before as working with the professor, Nigel, felt more like working with a mentor and creative director for a production than a professor for a class.”

The outpour of love and support from students involved in the productions, audience members, and other professors alike made it easy to see that the community surrounding Co-Lab fostered a creative environment that allowed students to truly create productions that spoke to them and that they felt passionate about designing.

deeply true partnership, equity and belonging—a space of vulnerability and, at times, even uncertainty. We don’t know what’s going to work, and, yet, with courage, we try it anyway. It’s not always comfortable, but I think it’s essential—to really see and to really allow ourselves to be seen in order to experience real connection and share real compassion as we live, breathe and grow together. I like being a fellow traveler and a work-in-progress, and I am so appreciative to Beth, Jeff and all the students for being so welcoming to me throughout this entire experience.”

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band. Even though the band is such a huge part of the show, it is really the only scene in which I can really interact with them. I feel like the humor really comes through in that scene and it was definitely one of my favorites to rehearse,” said Tomomi Lewis-Noguchi '24, who played the role of Diskit, who becomes the lead screamer for the metal band.

“I will just say that one of the scenes that always touched me with both humor and authentic human connection is the one in which Diskit throws up on her kind of first date with Riley. Diskit’s throw-



# Working at the dining hall as a student: social burden or power trip?

BY CLAIRE SPENARD  
STAFF WRITER

To most Muhlenberg students, the dining hall is a place to relax, socialize and be served. For me, it doubles as a place of work. For each service that I receive as a customer, I also provide as a front of house worker. This swapping of roles affects not only the relationship I have to the food service at my institution, but also to my fellow students with whom I share this communal space.

As a full-time Muhlenberg student and part-time employee of the Sodexo food company, work and school are heavily intertwined. From moment to moment, I ebb and flow between my positionality as a student and my positionality as a service worker; I feel a dramatic difference in how I carry myself in these two spaces.

I feel grounded by having a job alongside school. Even though the dining hall is located on campus, when I go to work I'm transcending the social-academic hive of Muhlenberg. There is a level of diversity amongst this group of people that doesn't exist in the student body. The women I have befriended here often tell me how lucky I am to be a student and to be moving on. My co-workers are a mixed batch of old and young, people born and raised in Allentown and others who have immigrated to America, each person with varying interests and passions. We have English speakers, Spanish speakers, Arabic speakers and some incredibly valuable multilingual people who help us all un-

derstand each other. Despite the language barriers, the job gets done and each day we serve around 2,000 meals to Muhlenberg students, faculty, staff and others who visit.

There are times when I feel like an imposter with my co-workers. I work very few hours compared to others who work day-in and day-out to make a livable wage. I am in the incredibly privileged position to be receiving higher education and gaining intellectual and cultural capital through being a student here. Even being able to speak English is a big advantage in this workplace because easily conversing with managers fosters trust between us and a better ability to advocate for myself as a worker. Despite our differing levels of privilege, while at work, there is an understanding between us; we receive the same treatment from our side of the counter. For me, most days of the week, I get to experience the dining hall from the other side. Those who I serve alongside are often serving me, and this feels strange. Am I the annoying customer who I complain about when I'm in uniform?

Since beginning this job I've become hyper-conscious of the ways that I approach service workers in all settings. I have felt the long hours of the arm scooping motion and the dread of panicked customers rushing to get food who look upset that you can't serve it fast enough. I see a "Me, Me, Me!" mentality show up in the dining hall more than in any other spaces on campus. Being on the receiving end of this influences the way I approach

my peers in the classroom, I see them in a different light and this can feel like a social burden.

The most interesting station that I frequently operate is the swipes counter. Imagine spending hours having to say "Good, thanks!" in response to people carelessly spitting out "Hi, how are you?" without looking at you or considering the fact that you have to respond to hundreds of other people who do the same thing. It's isolating and exhausting. Personally, I only ask people how they are if I care to know what they will say back, no matter what it is. To receive this empty question from strangers steadily is an intense experience that makes me feel annoyed and disheartened. At Muhlenberg, in general, this exchange happens habitually and in my experience it often feels automatic and inauthentic because it occurs even when there's no opportunity for a conversation to follow. When I'm working at the dining hall I deal with this directly and wearisomely.

Working at the dining hall the past two years has been a positive experience. I have gained valuable insight from meeting people who live a life very different from mine and seeing my own student body from a different perspective. I have also gained a sense of empowerment through my ability to exist on both sides; to look across the counter and have an understanding of the other. One of my co-workers who is also a student said, "I like when people that once intimidated me have to ask me to use the bathroom."

This is a special kind of power which fuels us as we go about our days as students, a power that can only be achieved through our position at the dining hall.

As I approach graduation I feel excited about my plans for the future. I get to leave the dining hall behind and move on to new places and skill sets. But, most of the people I currently work with will not. They will continue washing the tables and dishes of Muhlenberg students to come. I have the privilege to exist on both sides of the counter and the freedom to leave.

Friends often ask me what it's like to work at the dining hall and I always encourage them to consider it for themselves, but very few actually do. We, as students, tend to stay in our comfortable "Muhlenbubble" and we crave being understood by those we surround ourselves with. It may be intimidating to join a workforce of people who cannot always understand you, but in order to learn, it's essential to be open to understanding across cultures, languages and backgrounds. The most valuable part of this job has been hearing the stories of those I work with and finding common ground. By working at the dining hall as a student, I am dancing between the nuanced lines of power that exist in institutions like ours. When we let the in-betweens breathe, we empower ourselves to learn from each other and grow.

## I love Allentown & it's not a joke anymore.

BY HARLI STRAUSS-COHN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

This semester I am a community intern at Promise Neighborhoods of the Lehigh Valley. Three times a week I get to take the bus and interact with the world and life outside of the Muhlenbubble. It's amazing. Promise Neighborhoods has opened me up to people doing the everyday work to solve the "big world problems" I get to learn about in my interdisciplinary, liberal arts, sustainability and international studies double major (with a concentration in race, colonization and social justice because I just can't get enough). The day before the internship application was due to the Office of Community Engagement, I sent a hasty email to Beth Halpern—can I have more time? I just decided I was going to stay here next semester.

I had been planning to go abroad. This whole school year. I left in May of 2022 not expecting to step foot on this campus until August of 2023. My whole sophomore year I spent so much time comparing, contradicting and corrupting my capacity to enjoy this space. This place. These people. So I was going to escape. I was going to see the world. I was going to do so many different things. Just ask

the Office of Global Engagement. In my mind, in my plans, and in my forms I have been to Costa Rica, Uganda, Amsterdam, Chile, Cambodia, the list could go on.

But my feet, my heart, my soul and maybe my anxieties too, they all compounded and brought me back here. Allentown, Pennsylvania.

Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

In many ways I have learned more in transit in Allentown, interacting with people on the streets and at Promise Neighborhoods than I ever could in a classroom. More than I could and all that I could anywhere in the world. It doesn't matter that I'm in Allentown. Yet it means everything that I'm in Allentown. Small moments shared amid massive and minuscule movements. I smile when I witness a "how are you?" between strangers on the 101. I am amazed with the odds of the universe when old friends find and greet each other on the 213. I feel powerful when I figure out I can take the 218 to get back to campus quicker without Google Maps having told me so (though it is amazing and I highly recommend leaning on it as a guide to LANta!).

I knew someone in high school who had just moved away from Allentown. When I told him I was going to Muhlen-

berg he didn't know what it was, let alone that it was located in Allentown. A speck and spark of a place that we get to call home for four-ish years. How amazing is that? To live in a city that has not been built around us: remarkably privileged, complicated, anxious, learning, changing, annoying, beautiful college students. I think about land and space a lot. Land use, the ways it has been stolen, degraded, destroyed, morphed, memorialized. We make land out to be so much more and so much less than it is. We construct borders and national identities and... we betray the environment and forget how we are a part of it. We build on top of entire ecosystems and then scream if a bug dares enter "our space."

My freshman year, a centipede entered "my" space. This space that I had lived in for maybe two months. Do you know how long centipedes have been living on this planet? I don't know either but I'm sure it's been a long time. My single in Brown set up to be a triple. What a time to be alive and growing on this campus consumed and concerned with COVID-19. So much growth took place once I did have a place to call my own.

I am constantly struggling with ownership and feeling a sense of belonging or rightful ownership over a topic or place.

This struggle is easing as I realize no one owns anything and we all belong to everything. I'm sure that the triple in Brown I once felt at home now houses the hopes, dreams, and tears of new inhabitants and homemakers. Now, as I am near the end of my junior year in college, I really do love Allentown. At the beginning of the school year, I went to an OCE Block Party where I took a temporary tattoo that read "I <3 Allentown" in gold sparkly lettering because I thought it was funny. Now I truly do love Allentown and that temporary tattoo wound up not being so temporary as it has glistened on my window, watching my love for this place grow over the past eight months.

So, that's been my experience thus far. If I were to leave you with anything, I hope you'll take the bus sometime, open your eyes up to the wide world that exists in this single city alone. See people and smile when you walk by them on the sidewalk. Say 'hi' not just to the dog but to the person walking it too. Take your headphones off every now and then and listen and learn from the birds in the wind, the people in their cars and whatever else you may find. It's a curious thing, this life we've got. And we live in an "all inspiring" city, as the motto says, so get out there and be inspired.



# Student experiences in Muhlenberg's education department

BY AYDEN LEVINE  
PHOTO EDITOR

All of the students who shared their experiences for the purpose of this article have been given aliases. This is for the purpose of students' feeling able to express the full extent of their opinions without fear of recourse.

I was on the education track for seven semesters. After a rough mental health semester that resulted in a failing grade in one of my education courses, I received this email:

"At this point in the semester, there is nothing more you can do to salvage your grade. My suggestion is to work toward graduating from Muhlenberg with your degree in Media and Communication and, should you decide you would like to rededicate yourself to pursuing teacher certification, continue that path at another institution in the future. In addition, a departmental recommendation is required to be admitted to the professional semester. It is difficult, if not impossible, for the department to give you a recommendation to proceed into the professional semester."

Upon receiving this email, I was distraught and taken aback. Teaching has been a dream of mine since the tenth grade, and this was not the experience that I had hoped for when I applied to Muhlenberg. Since leaving the education program, I have had time to reflect on the aspects of the program that need to be addressed and evaluated, and I've come to this conclusion: there are inherent flaws in the education program at Muhlenberg and in writing this article I hope to bring attention to some of these shortcomings.

The education program is not a major, it is a certification program where students graduate with a teaching license. The program is a strict four-year-long intensive experience where students must take 11 courses (for students on the secondary education program) or 18 courses (for students on the pre-k to fourth grade program) in addition to their separate major courses and GARs, and that's not counting the time and effort that goes into fieldwork placements which range from 20 to 40 hours a semester. Fieldwork placements involve allocating three hours a week to go into a local school and shadow a teacher in the field. Students also are expected to teach at least one lesson in the semester and assist the co-operating teacher while working in the classroom. Despite being a pressing time commitment, and acting as almost an extra class in terms of the amount of time necessary for many students, fieldwork hours are unpaid, and students do not receive credit for them beyond completing the fieldwork requirement. Several education students have expressed being pressured to put their work for the program above all else, and have been made to feel bad if they aren't giving all of their attention to education. In my experience, my dedication to the education program was questioned when I talked about my desire to go abroad.

In gathering quotes for this piece, I spoke to a student, called Sage here, who is one of many students that made the difficult decision to drop the education program.

Sage said, "I understand that our field work program is meant to help us succeed once we're actually in a classroom. That being said, the amount of hours required of us outside of the Muhlenberg classroom is like a job, and if you're doing two fieldwork placements at the same time, it becomes really not feasible to be a successful well-rounded student. It just did not feel realistic, and I wasn't receiving the flexibility that I needed."

Sage added, "The circumstances around me deciding to drop was the pressure of time commitment when it came to field work. 'Cause I had to do two field work placements [at the same time]... I have to have a job on campus and have a source of income on top of finishing my major requirements on top of finishing ed track requirements [and] GAR requirements. It is difficult to be a student and to also do those field work requirements and to try to make money at school and be leaders of clubs and organizations that I care about deeply. I didn't feel like I could be a person or at least a functioning person, while also trying to do that and the education program. It was not feeling fulfilling in the way that I had wanted it to be."

Riley, another former education student, also noted time as a factor in her decision to leave the program. "I have been left feeling defeated and invisible in the eyes of some of my education professors. As someone who holds many different areas of academic and extracurricular interest, it has been extremely frustrating to have to turn down experiences as a result of the immense time and energy I have been required to commit to the education program. This has left me feeling extremely burnt out, with minimal verbal support given by education professors after expressing this struggle. While I continue to hold a passion for education and positively impacting students, the constraints of the education program have left this difficult to achieve while maintaining my wellbeing in the process."

From my experience, the education department also continues to employ professors who do not promote or uphold the standards which Muhlenberg claims to be at the forefront of their mission, bringing down the academic excellence of this institution as a whole.

Former education student Lily noted, "The first meeting that I had with my advisor, I sat down and she basically told me, 'I don't think this is going to work. I don't know how you're going to use your mobility aid around kids.' And this is the teacher of the special ed and diverse learners class. So having this conversation pretty early off the bat was very discouraging, especially as this had been something that I've wanted to do for my entire life. And to hear that because of my disability, it was looking like I wasn't gonna be able to do it, was really disheartening. Unfortunately, after having my advisor be so negative about my possibility of being on track, I decided that it was not going to be physically or mentally healthy for me to stay on the track at this school in the future. I'm not exactly sure what I wanna do [now] as that has always been my go-to plan. I hope that later on I can find a

group of people that is willing to make the proper accommodations and that no student in the future is ever made to feel like their mental or physical health is a barrier for something like teaching."

Bailey, a former education student, said, "From my first encounter on campus with the ed department, I was told by [a professor] that I should try not to let the kids in the public school system see my mobility aid because I didn't want to scare them. Later on, I took Disability and Difference in America with [this professor] and throughout that semester, every single day I would go home and scream at my mom or cry to my roommate because of all the offensive and old language [this professor] used in class. We spent multiple days learning about Aspergers, which is not in the DSM [The DSM, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, is the handbook used by healthcare professionals to diagnose mental disorders] anymore. It was removed in 2013; you can't teach a class about it. We also watched a movie called 'The Ringer,' it's about someone who fakes being disabled to compete in the Special Olympics. After finishing the movie she announces, 'Half the cast is disabled. Can you guess which ones?'"

This was not this professor's first time using outdated language surrounding her field of special education. Sage noted, "[She played] a big part of me no longer wanting to be in the program just because of the way that she acts and responds to situations and classes, [about] special education being so problematic and felt really discouraging. She frequently uses wrong terminology and it's extremely inappropriate."

Chloe, a student who has completed the education program, said, "[She] has said some problematic things in her class. When speaking about the Holocaust she completely failed to mention that Jewish people were part of those who were persecuted in the Holocaust, and in her special ed course she has used the 'R' word to refer to students with disabilities."

Bailey said, "Kids only learn things by experience. How can you be actively teaching multiple classes on special ed and using the wrong language and not believing that disabled individuals should be in the school?"

Students who make it through all of the education courses participate in a "capstone" student teaching semester where they take two night courses while spending every weekday in a classroom, acting as a full-time unpaid teacher. Students not only are not compensated for their work, but have to pay around \$400 for participation in this semester.

Chloe said, "One of my professors... essentially invalidated my experience being a woman teacher in a high school. During my second student teaching placement, I was explaining to him how uncomfortable I felt by students staring at me a certain way or trying to talk to me in a certain way and how that made me apprehensive to continue having and building relationships with my students. He did not show empathy towards me and almost shut me down in a sense which really hurt me and my desire to give one hundred percent to

the program."

In a field that has been dominated by women for so long, and in a department that is filled with female professors, it is shocking to me how much the professors still hold heteronormative and outdated views, which impacted my experience in the classroom.

Chloe said, "In field work, you have a meeting before starting field work to talk about how you dress, how to act, etc. And when talking about clothing... [the professor] kept the gender binary there and present. She would say that men wear ties and slacks, and that's the only acceptable way to dress. When it came to women, long dresses, long skirts, your chest had to be covered because, and I quote, I don't wanna receive an email that's titled 'boobs' or 'cleavage.' It was not inclusive to people who don't adhere to a gender binary. It just felt like it was coming back to the whole argument of women should cover their shoulders in school because they don't wanna distract men. And that was uncomfortable. Someone I spoke to afterwards jokingly was like, 'What am I supposed to wear then? Do I wear nothing?'"

I was called into a professor's office and berated for missing the pre-fieldwork meeting one semester, even though I was in attendance for it every semester before, and knew all of the information already. While I acknowledge the meeting was mandatory and I should have been there, when I tried to defend myself and explain my absence I was yelled at. Then, the professor told me to smile more because no one likes a girl with a rude face.

Students in the education program are taught to have empathy for their students, because you never know what a child is going through, but in my experience we are rarely afforded that same courtesy.

Chloe added, "I did not feel cared for when I was in the program. I did not feel like I was supported in any way. For people who are supposed to be teaching us how to teach others, I feel that they have not done a great job of showcasing that as professors. They teach us to be sensitive to the baggage that students come into the classroom with, but at the same time, they are not willing to give us the same grace in their classroom. And it feels very performative. And that's I think the best word that I can use to describe the education department, it's performative."

Personally, I was struggling in one of my courses and I spoke with my professor. Instead of coming to me with compassion and guidance she told me maybe I should rethink my decision to be a teacher because she didn't think I had it in me. I still want to be a teacher; the failures of this program have not diminished my passion for education. I'm not sure what changes I hope come from this article, I just hope to give space to empower students in the education program to speak on their experiences.

Education is going to be difficult, it's meant to be, students need to be equipped to be teachers. However, my experiences and those of the others in this program indicate that the desire to teach and ability to do so is not being fostered at Muhlenberg.



# I Can Hear Your Skin

By AJ HENLEY

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Hello Muhlenberg. We need to have a serious conversation. As temperatures warm and we bring our shorts and short-sleeved shirts out of the closet, our routines need to change. We need to get serious about a necessary staple in every adult's self-care regimen: lotion. Lotion has reportedly been around for over 5000 years after it was first introduced by ancient Sumerians and Egyptians (and they gave us the Pyramids, so I trust their expertise). It was invented in harsh climates of high heat and strong winds as people recognized the toll that this weather took on their skin. Lotion makes your skin look and feel good, reduces skin problems, and can even act as a protective barrier for your skin. For a process that takes five minutes, moisturizing provides a plethora of positive effects.

So why am I running an advertising

campaign for the concept of lotion? Because I can hear your skin. When we wear shorts or short-sleeved shirts, a lot more of our skin comes into contact with itself, and this friction produces a sound. This happens naturally, but unless the movement is aggressive, the sound should be very quiet. Dry skin is rougher and encounters more friction, so the sound it makes tends to be much louder than the sound of smooth skin. As we've freed our arms and legs, the sounds have become noticeable. A little too noticeable. From a simple scratch to a bold brush, I can hear the sound of exposed forearms and calves in class. And it's distracting. How am I supposed to focus on the daily crossword the bored student in front of me has pulled up if I'm listening to your skin? I can only do so many off-topic things at once.

But don't use lotion just because some random person said it annoys them when

you don't. There are other important reasons to prioritize lotion too. While Allentown has a very different climate than ancient Egypt and Sumer, we do experience frequent periods of very high winds. Worryingly, these winds can increase your risk of skin cancer. Our outermost layer of skin helps protect us from the sun's UV radiation. Extreme winds often dry out and weaken this layer, which harms its protective capabilities. Weak skin can't protect you from the sun like healthy skin, making you more susceptible to developing some forms of skin cancer. The best way to protect your exposed skin from the dangerous effects of wind is moisturizing to prevent the outer layer from drying out.

So please, I implore you, please make sure we're not skipping this necessary step in our morning routine. You'll be fostering your long-term health and well-being with less than five minutes a day.

You'll glow and feel silky smooth, and you can even impress everyone with your super quiet, super stealthy movements. Your skin and my grades will thank you immensely. Let's all enjoy the nice weather in a happy and healthy way!

# What it takes to rage as a chronically ill college student

By LILY MAGOON

ASSISTANT OP/ED EDITOR

It goes without saying that college is hard—but doing it with a chronic illness is much, much harder. All the usual academic and mental health struggles still apply, but with the added fun of additional pain, physical and psychological limitations—and in the case of invisible illnesses, having to constantly justify or prove to classmates, professors, and administration that you're actually ill. These are all very important and very real parts of being a chronically ill college student, but they are not the subject of this article. Say you have a chronic illness, but you're managing the pain, depression/anxiety, and weird physical symptoms you might be having well enough, and are determined to still have a college social life. Good for you! However, there's a lot more planning that goes into having a quasi-normal night out than you might realize, and it can get comically intricate pretty fast.

For example: pills. Depending on the illness, you could be taking something like 20 individual pills worth of prescriptions and supplements sometimes up to three times a day. Some of these will need to be taken with food, on an empty stomach, or can't be taken together. Even after you've figured out what needs to be taken when and how, there remains the alcohol question. College students drink on medications when they're not supposed to pretty frequently—especially SSRIs and other antidepressants, but there are a few different levels of drugs you're not supposed to drink on: 1) the ones you're not supposed to, but that probably aren't

going to hurt you, 2) the ones you're really not supposed to, but once in a while is probably ok, and 3) the ones you Cannot Under Any Circumstances Drink On Or You Will Die.

People on drugs in the third category are pretty much doomed to go to parties sober here (unless they feel like making the 30 minute drive to a recreational dispensary in New Jersey every once in a while), but for the other two categories it's just a matter of planning. The ultimate goal of drinking on meds is to not get violently nauseous as soon as you start. After all, the typical college student experience is to throw up after drinking too much, not because you took your antibiotic with a shot of tequila. Step one is to leave about two hours in between when you take your medication and when you actually start drinking. Step two is snacks. Snacks are your best friend. We're talking toast, oatmeal, cereal, really any carb-based breakfast food is ideal—and there are worse things in life than having breakfast for dinner every weekend.

The second thing to think about is any medical devices or mobility aids you're supposed to have on you. If you're able to go without and don't want to compromise the integrity of your fit by adding compression socks or knee braces, you might just ditch them altogether for a few hours. If they're non-negotiable, you might try to conceal them with baggy jeans, long-sleeved tops, or conveniently placed accessories. For things like canes, colostomy bags, or other essentials that aren't so easy to hide, you'd better go all out. Blacklight theme? Grab some neon paint, tape, markers—whatever—and get to work. Stoplight party? Use your medi-

cal device to get across your relationship status with the right color customization. Maybe there's no theme, and you go for stickers or gems to dress it up a little. After all, we have laptop and water bottle stickers for a reason, right? We have these things with us so much that we want to make sure they reflect our personality—medical devices are no different.

And of course, one of the most uncomfortable parts of partying when you're ill: the "just in case" talk. It's pretty hard to be spontaneous when you have pills to take on a certain schedule, dietary restrictions to maintain, and a cute tote bag with braces and a blood pressure monitor to keep track of, but one of the most important things is to be honest about your situation to the people you're with. In case of a medical emergency, you want to make sure your friends can communicate any important information to emergency responders if you aren't able to. This conversation will definitely bring the vibes down a little, so maybe try and have it before the pregame instead of during. Or, to make it even easier, invest in some medical jewelry that has the important information on it. They even make them with QR codes now so emergency responders can just scan them to see more detailed information about you if you're unable to give it yourself. It's impossible to make this conversation fun, but having the important information easily accessible will at least make it short—and you get an accessory out of it!

After all of this, your diseased but determined college student will go out just like anyone else. They might be sober, partying with a cane, or maybe not getting very low when Flo Rida comes

on, but gosh darnit they're out there. It might seem ridiculous to some people to go through all this effort just to get to a frat basement with mediocre music and terrible dancing, especially if it causes physical pain or undo exhaustion. But the thing is, when you're always exhausted and in pain, sometimes it's nice to be exhausted and in pain doing something just because it's what you do in college, not because you have to do it. As the saying (sort of) goes, the college student must have bread, but they must have roses too. And even though it might smell like stale beer and sweat, sometimes a college party is the rose you're willing to fight for.



# Softball gears up for crunch time

BY EVAN SCHLOTTERBECK  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

This year's softball edition of the battle for the Lehigh Valley happened to go the way of the Moravian Greyhounds, but Muhlenberg did not go down without a fight.

On Thursday, Apr. 20, at Cedar Creek Field, Moravian defeated the Mules 4-2 and 8-1 consecutively in the teams' doubleheader for the 2023 season. Although the score lines were not in favor of the home team, if a few bounces were to have gone the other way in either game, the results could have favored 'Berg. In game one, the Mules competed well, grabbing a 2-1 lead in the third, but unfortunately letting it slip in the fifth and failing to find a way to climb back. However, they demonstrated their unwillingness to play passively by attacking their opponents head-on with intensity and grit.

Although on the losing end, the Mules did many things well in this matchup against a solid Moravian team. "One thing that I believe went well in our first game against Moravian was our ability to make adjustments to something we typically struggle with. We have been working on, as a team, hitting the outside pitch solidly throughout our practices this season," commented Infielder Kaitlyn Buurman '25.

In retrospect, things are not always as bad or as good as they seemed in the moment, and it is a good sign the Mules are

still observing the positives of their displays during this doubleheader. "I think a lot of positives came out of the games for the team. Moravian is always a strong competitor against us, and the Lehigh Valley rivalry is real. Knowing this, we wanted to give them a good game," said Infielder Kaya Mahy '25. Learning from losses is a robust predictor of future success, and this team is always eager to do just that.

The Mules travel to Swarthmore and McDaniel this week for doubleheaders that will make or break the Mules' playoff hopes for this season. Lessons learned throughout the year will inevitably shine throughout all four games. "Something that we as a team have learned from the most recent games is the importance of wanting to 'punch back.' If we, as a team, get scored on and need to score runs to make up for the deficit, we need to do everything we can to back up our pitchers and work hard for one another to prove that we want to win ball games," explained Buurman.

The Mules also hope to display their adaptability on the field when other teams mix things up. "If there is one thing we as a team need to focus on going into our final two conference doubleheaders, it is making adjustments. Recognizing what the other team is doing to us and then making quick adjustments to force the other team to have to alter their plan is imperative," added Mahy.

This upcoming stretch for Muhlenberg



PHOTO BY GABBY MATTEI '25

Sophia Cicchetti '24 high fiving her teammates.

softball is going to make a statement both within the program and to onlookers, rivals and alumni. It is up to the players and coaches of this specific squad. Regardless of what has happened thus far for the Mules, they are ready to give it their everything.

"Going into these crucial conference games, we need to have resilience. We have struggled this season but need to leave it in the past and focus on sweeping the next two doubleheaders to have the possibility of securing a spot in the

conference tournament. We know we are fully capable of doing this, and we need to trust ourselves and each other. When we play confidently, selflessly and with fight, we see the best results. With the correct mentality, we have a good chance at getting some wins out of the next two weeks and hopefully beyond," said Mahy.

On Saturday, Apr. 29 make sure to tune into Centennial Conference TV as the Mules take on McDaniel at 1:00 and 3:00 p.m.

# Women's lax defeats the Red Devils

BY OLIVIA OBERMAN  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

The Mules are on a three game win streak against Centennial Conference powerhouses, and Meaghan Haughney '26 is keeping her foot on the gas.

On Saturday, Apr. 22, the Muhlenberg women's lacrosse team earned a 17-7 win over McDaniel College. After the whistle sounded at 1:00 p.m., the game was disrupted by a 6 hour rain delay-making it the longest game in Centennial Conference history. Nonetheless, the Mules persevered and got the job done. Following their integral win over McDaniel, the Mules hold an impressive 11-3 overall record and are ranked 4th in the Centennial Conference. With only two conference games still remaining on their schedule, a playoff ticket is in their favor. "Our team motto this year is 'all gas, no breaks,' meaning we are all to leave it out on the field," said Captain Emily Gaffney '23 of the Muhlenberg women's lacrosse team.

A few senior members on the team have reflected on the program's development over the season and their goals moving forward into Centennial Conference playoffs. "Our team has put a lot of positive energy and effort into this season and for the rest of this week we're focused on doing our best to earn a strong seat in playoffs while having fun together. Our

game on Wednesday against Ursinus is very important for us in order to guarantee a spot in the playoffs and potentially position us for a first-round home playoff game. Over the course of the season the team has worked hard and had fun while also playing as a cohesive unit. At this point, we're focused on each individual game and trying to make it as far as we can," expressed Captain Sarah Duffy '23.

On Wednesday, Apr. 26, the Mules played Ursinus College and simultaneously celebrated their senior leaders. Duffy adds, "I don't want to speak for the other seniors, but I think the seven of us are just trying to embrace the last days of our collegiate lacrosse experiences and are enjoying making memories with the team!"

Gaffney dedicated a lot of this collective motivation is due to the time lost on the field during the pandemic, "I think everyone on the team has the energy this year to give it their all because the senior class. Three years ago, our freshman year, our first season got canceled because of COVID and [we were] only [able] to play seven games our sophomore year still because of COVID. With those two years getting cut short, everyone works hard each and everyday during practice like it is their last. We are very grateful to have a full season while [being] successful both in and out of conference but still hungry to win in playoffs next week."



PHOTO BY LOUIS COCCO '23

Women's Lacrosse seniors look forward to playing in the CC playoffs.

Their hard work ethic has and is paying off. Another catalyst to the program's recent success is their chemistry.

Defender Grace Bruther '23 elaborates, "The team has become closer throughout the season, so we are more comfortable playing with each other. We know each other's style of play at this point really well so it makes it easy to depend on each other in games and know what to expect out of everyone." Bruther continues, "My favorite part of playing lacrosse at

Muhlenberg is being so close with the team. This past weekend we had a 6 hour delay at McDaniel and we were able to still have a great time even in an unfortunate situation."

It is one thing to create a motto, it is another to follow it. The Muhlenberg women's lacrosse record has proven a clear commitment to their motto, "all gas, no breaks."



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## A theatre major takes on sports entertainment

Spotlight: Lauren Koranda '23

BY MATTHEW BAKER-GRUNZA  
SPORTS EDITOR

This past Tuesday, Apr. 25 I had the distinct pleasure to meet with Lauren Koranda '23, a well-spoken, intelligent, creative, flexible and hard-working thespian who ventured into the sports entertainment world this spring. Koranda worked for the Philadelphia American Hockey League (AHL) team the Lehigh Valley Phantoms for the past semester as their Game Presentation Intern. An unexpected opportunity that quickly became a "life-altering experience," according to Koranda.

Before Koranda was a key member of the fan experience at the PPL Center, she was a kid with a dream. A dream that was borne from the high-energy performance of the Cheetah Girls. This experience ignited a lifetime of passion for big concerts. "I was so fortunate in my childhood that my family loved going to concerts and for big ones would travel across state lines to see people multiple times on the same tour. Having those experiences of seeing the same concert multiple times, it's like seeing a theater production here multiple times, your eye gets more refined, the more times you see the same thing over and over again. I think that really hooked me. I was like, I want to know what is going on behind the scenes to make this happen."

Koranda brought her passion for art into the work environment when she served as a marketing intern at the Barrington Stage Company where her boss, Christopher Castanho, remarked on her LinkedIn, "I could not give Lauren a HIGHER recommendation. She picks things up quickly, understands branding at a very high level, and takes initiative on all projects she is assigned." While this wasn't initially her dream job, Koranda knew the path to becoming the woman behind the curtain would be highly competitive. "The biggest thing that I did for myself in my time here was keep myself open to possibilities. Because without that, the things that I am proudest of and that were most fulfilling to me would have never happened if I had stayed on the very defined path that I thought I was supposed to be on, or that I saw other people on," said Koranda.

An internship for the Phantoms first appears as a job in sports management, but Koranda's vision saw the other side of PPL Center's business strategy: event

hosting. "It's a big part of why I was drawn to an internship at the PPL Center, because it was a foot in the door that is pretty hard to come by when you're a college student. Entry-level in big concert industry jobs are very hard to come by and I thought if I can put this on my resume and spin it the right way, it might catapult me to hopefully [be in] that world too."

This flexibility has given Koranda a breadth of experiences within the Muhlenberg theater department; additionally, she is an R.J. Fellow and Writing Tutor. These experiences and accolades are demonstrations of the intelligence, creativity and communication skills that Koranda brings to the stage, the office, and now the ice. "I came to Muhlenberg to do theater, to be a director specifically. That's what brought me here. And I've gotten to do so much of that. Since my first semester, I've gotten to assistant direct and associate direct and direct my own things and work on new plays, new musicals, classics, huge shows and small shows. I really do feel like in some ways, I've gotten to do it all."

Besides her specific career plan in directing, Koranda has allowed herself to explore other roles. "I even got to stage manage, which was not something that was on my radar before college, but I got invested in it [because] it's here." Stage management gave Koranda a new understanding of the detail and logistics required for the production of high-quality entertainment. The same level of diligence that is expected by the Philadelphia Phantoms. She added, "Those were skills that I feel catapulted me into this internship as well. I've also gotten to work in the theater department's marketing office, which was this huge box I wanted to check," said Koranda.

Koranda originally applied as the video production intern but the hours conflicted with her ambitious schedule. Ron Gaita, the Senior Director of Game Presentation and Creative Design for the Phantoms saw Koranda's skillset and hours as a great fit for the Game Presentation Intern. "All of the off-ice games with the fans, or things that go up on the video board, or promotional things from local business sponsors that are in the game that helped create the environment of entertainment are so essential to especially the AHL, or any minor league team," explained Koranda. "There are unfortunately not enough diehard hockey fans in the Lehigh Valley to fill an 8500-seat arena for 36 home games this season. So,

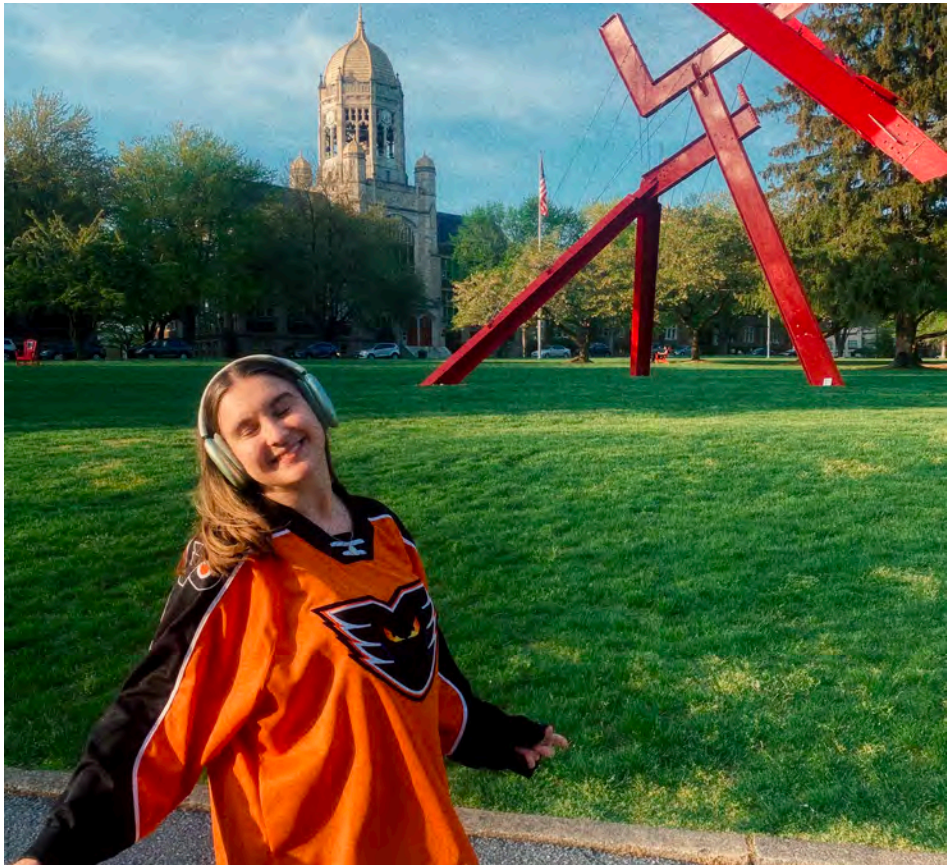


PHOTO COURTESY OF LAUREN KORANDA '23

Lauren Koranda '23 discusses the journey from "Cheetah Girls" to AHL Hockey.

you need to have the full fan experience for people that gets them coming back for more, even if they don't know hockey. If you don't care about hockey, even if the team is not playing well you need something that gets people coming back."

Sports entertainment was a foreign idea to Koranda, she entered the position with her theater skillset and a lifelong passion for the energy that is brought into concert venues. She describes her first day on the job saying, "[I] felt like I was kind of thrown into the fire and [needed] to prove myself in a situation where the person [was supposed] to be there to interview players on media day couldn't be there. And so I did it. And it was literally my very first day and [I had] that opportunity to prove that I was capable and competent. It sent me on a good path where they were willing to trust me with more and more things and random things here and there."

A key to the experience of fans in the PPL center is the music that is pumped through the jumbotron, "And my boss, Ron is like a killer at DJ-ing every game." So, when Koranda wanted to play a new song, the pressure was on. A theater kid at heart, she was inspired by "The Phantom of The Opera," which sparked a search for a heavy metal cover of the hit Broadway musical. Gaita loved the creativity

and the song became the new power play song. "Hopefully, they keep it and I'll come back and I'll hear it for years and years," said Koranda.

Besides the incredible journey that has been her internship, Koranda wishes that her peers could learn from her experience as a theatre lover in a sports environment, so that they may dispel any previously ingrained stereotypes. "I think the biggest thing that I did for myself was I always prioritize and lead with respect, I think that [a] lack of consideration is ultimately a lack of respect, and having that respect, having consideration could do a lot on this campus."

Not only did Koranda leave an indelible mark on the fan's experience by bringing together her life passions, but she will continue to shine as a beacon of Muhlenberg's excellence, as she has realized the dogma of a liberal education. Following her graduation this May Koranda has been offered a position at the Wells Fargo Center working for the Flyers and living out her dream of helping produce concerts. "Some of my favorite concerts I've seen have been at the Fargo Center for major artists that mean the world to me and having those memories and now knowing that I'm going to be making them for the future me out there somewhere, it's overwhelmingly amazing," said Koranda.

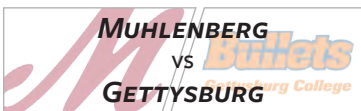
Coming up this week in  
**SPORTS**  
Apr. 27 - May 4

### Baseball



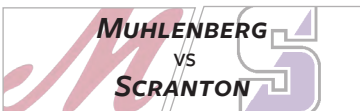
Fri, Apr. 28 @ 10:30 a.m.  
Coca-Cola Park

### Women's Lacrosse



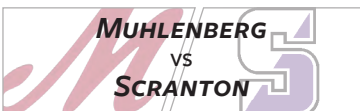
Sat, Apr. 29 @ 1:00 p.m.  
Scotty Wood Stadium

### Softball



Sun, Apr. 30 @ 1:00 p.m.  
Patriots Park

### Softball



Sun, Apr. 30 @ 3:00 p.m.  
Patriots Park



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### SPORTS

'Berg students win big with local hockey team.  
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PHOTO COURTESY OF MUHLENBERG OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

# Concerns, class sizes and consequences of cancellations

BY CYDNEY WILSON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

It is no secret that over the past couple of years, Muhlenberg's enrollment has been declining. As The Weekly previously reported, there were 2,178 students enrolled in the fall of 2015 and 1,857 in fall of 2022. As enrollment decreases, something else that has shifted is faculty to student ratio, which was 10:1 four years ago, and today sits at 8:1. Provost Laura Furge, Ph.D., shared that the College aims to get back to the 10:1 ratio. But what consequences does this have for the student body? According to Workday, in the fall of 2019, 834 classes were offered. Going into the fall of 2023, there will be 659 classes offered. A correlated effect is the cancellation (or threatened cancellation) of classes with low enrollment, which is happening across the board. Professors and students in a wide range of disciplines from political science, psychology, English and more have expressed concern and frustration over this occurrence. Some untenured faculty have opted not to comment.

So, is Muhlenberg canceling all classes below a certain level of enrollment?

Furge shared that Muhlenberg is looking at other institutions to base their determination of whether there will be a minimum class size at which a class would not run. She said, "I've shared a plan with our department chairs that's very similar to Lafayette's, where we would have a cut-off of maybe eight, maybe six."

While there is no hard cut-off yet, some classes over the past few semesters have been canceled due to low enrollment.

One example is Government and Politics of South Asia, which was supposed to be offered this spring, but was canceled after registration in the fall of 2022 due to an enrollment of only five students. It is currently open for registration for fall 2023.

Shinam Hussain '25, who registered for the course last year, shared, "When I registered for it, I told [Political Science Department Chair] Dr. [Brian] Mello, 'I'm scared because there's only currently four people registered for it. And he's like, 'Oh, it's fine. If we can get up to eight or 10 it'll still go and we're anticipating more people to register for it.' And then all the registrations happened. And literally two weeks later, I got the email and it was like 'Sorry, this class won't be offered.'"

"I designed a brand new course, 'Government and Politics of South Asia.' Since Dr. Chris Herrick's retirement, we lost a person who was offering classes on East Asia and Africa, two area studies courses that were critical for political science as well as international studies, which has area studies requirements," said Professor of Political Science Mohsin Hashim, Ph.D. "I even got a four week course development grant to design this. And by the time I offered it, I thought, given the dearth of area studies courses, it would just fill up with enough bodies. And it didn't, and we had to cancel it. And we had to scamper to meet my commit-

ment, the teaching commitment. So I ended up teaching an intro course."

If this class is canceled again, Hashim says, "There will be a lack of area studies courses which will leave a gap in geographical coverage." He added, "It's a region where over 1.8 billion people live in India and Pakistan and the rivalries there. Bangladesh is such an interesting country that's developing well, India is a growing economy and climate, gender, borders, violence, democracy and all these things, would generate enough of an interest and I'm kind of at a loss and my department is too."

While some might believe that a small class size makes the class worth canceling, many professors disagree.

Mello says, "While I recognize the importance of being conscious of class size and planning, there are times when courses are offered—particularly when focused on areas of the world that expand the College's offerings in new areas of the world—when low-enrolled courses might need to be permitted to run as an expression of commitments to expand students global perspectives."

The classes that seem to be most at risk are those deemed electives.

"There may be fewer electives," says Furge. "So you may have had in the past, more elective options at any given time, and some of those electives then may start to rotate. So, something that was offered every semester may now only be offered once a year, or something that was offered once a year or maybe

only every other year."

Hashim says, "There are exceptional courses that are at risk. And yet, they're integral. They're called electives, but they're still integral to learning and the teaching mission of this department. And all of this will make you a global citizen, to live lives of leadership and responsibility, you have to understand different regions of the world."

There is another layer to this issue when the person teaching the canceled elective is an adjunct professor. Adjunct faculty get paid per course so if their course is canceled, they lose that income. And if a class is canceled close to the start of the following semester this gives the adjunct little time to find another course to teach and recoup the lost income. This might become pertinent given that some professors are currently hoping to increase enrollment in their courses with first-year students registering over the summer.

Psychology is another department that has faced the issue of canceled classes. Justin Billich '24, a psychology major, shared, "At this point last year... I was looking to take one more class to fill my socio-cultural processes requirement. And of those classes that could have fulfilled that two of them are Social Psychology and Contemporary Racism. Contemporary Racism is a 400 level that I really wanted to take on because I feel like it pertained a lot to society, where social psychology would give me more theoretical experience, but I wanted to get a better know-



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY

Serving the Muhlenberg College Community since 1883

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We request that advertising material be submitted by the Monday preceding publication at 5 p.m. If materials have not been received at that time, the advertisement will not run and the advertiser is still responsible for 100% payment. We reserve the right to decline any advertisement that is misleading, inaccurate, fraudulent, or deemed generally unacceptable. This determination will be made by the Business Staff in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief. The Muhlenberg Weekly maintains a distinction between its news & editorial content and advertising. As such, advertisements will not be accepted if they imitate the general style of The Weekly, intentionally or unintentionally. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: headlines, bylines, fonts, and column-arrangements. In order to make this distinction, The Weekly also reserves the right to include the word "advertisement" on any advertisement that is deemed too native.

# CAMPUS SAFETY NOTES

Courtesy of Muhlenberg College Department of Campus Safety

## 4/24

**Traffic**—Report of vehicle parked in middle of street at 2201 Chew, owner later identified and moved vehicle.

## 4/25

**Suspicious Person**—Report of suspicious person at the soccer field, individual identified and spoken to and left the area.

## 4/26

**Medical**—Report of sick student at Taylor Hall, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, Allentown EMS responded and transported to hospital.

**Medical**—Report of injured student at Trexler Pavilion, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, Allentown EMS responded and transported to hospital.

**Vandalism**—Report of vandalism in ML, smoke detector removed from ceiling mount, no suspects at this time.

## 4/27

**Vandalism**—Report of graffiti on wall in the CA, Plant Operations notified to remove.

**Traffic**—Report of minor motor vehicle accident causing damage to paint at ATO, no further incident.

**Medical**—Report to locate student at N23rd St., contact made, student transported to hospital by Campus Safety Officer.

**Accident**—Report of minor motor vehicle accident at the Village causing minor damage to paint.

**Disturbance**—Report of disturbance at Walz Hall, referred to Equity and Title IX.

## 4/28

**Medical**—Report of sick student at N23rd St., Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student transported to hospital by Campus Safety.

## 4/29

**Vandalism**—Report of vandalism to divider in bathroom in Seegers, no suspects at this time, work order issued for repair.

**Medical**—Report of injured visitor in Walz, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, Allentown EMS responded and transported to hospital.

**Medical**—Report of injured student at Trexler Pavilion, Muhlenberg College EMS responded, student refused further treatment or transport.

## 4/30

**Traffic**—Report of minor motor vehicle accident causing damage to bumper in Prosser Lot, no further incident.

# 2023 Commencement Luncheon



*Immediately following commencement ceremonies, graduates, families and guests are invited to attend an all-you-care-to-eat buffet luncheon in the Wood Dining Commons.*

Tickets:



 Muhlenberg College  
Dining



# Yik Yak resurgence brings out the ugly side of campus culture

BY ISABEL MOLETTIERI  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

If people love to do two things, it's talking about others or about themselves. And what better way to do those things than on an anonymous, location-based app?

But when the app is Yik Yak and allows students to post anonymously on anything and everything, it becomes a platform for cyberbullying and spreading rumors. This includes serious accusations of harm without a name to trace them back to.

Yik Yak was originally created in 2013 as a way for college students to connect with each other on campus. Similar to an anonymous Twitter, users are able to post 255 character "Yaks" that are posted to a discussion thread that is visible to everyone in a five mile radius. The app was shut down in 2017 in response to a decrease in popularity that occurred once the questionable content on the app grew tiring. In August 2021, Yik Yak was bought by an unnamed investor and its relaunch was announced.

Once again, Yik Yak is all the rage, and colleges are suffering the consequences. A student at Western Kentucky University was charged for "terroristic threatening" after posting a Yak about a bomb on campus in September 2022. A week later, a student at the University of Utah was arrested for saying that she would set off a nuclear reactor if the school's football team lost.

Muhlenberg College has built a reputation as a caring college, known for an im-

age of smiling students holding open every red door. Even so, its students were among those across the country that re-downloaded Yik Yak.

Yaks about the failures of the administration, what was being served in the dining hall, which theater productions were worth seeing and anonymous confessions of love (and hatred) were being posted every day. Quickly the content on Yik Yak shifted tones, from mundane comments about everyday occurrences to an open forum to discuss others and make accusations of sexual assault.

This trend was not taken lightly by the administration. On May 22, 2022, the dean of students and Title IX office sent out an email encouraging students to delete Yik Yak or at the very least report Yaks that might inflict harm on others.

This was not enough action to stop the use of Yik Yak. While there has been a decrease in students posting allegations, there are still dozens of Yaks posted every day at Muhlenberg.

"I'm afraid that YikYak won't die down. I think when people want to find a way to do something, they find a way to do it," says Marie Tohill '25, who does not have Yik Yak downloaded.

"Yik Yak to me is like the poison of our society. I don't believe in being able to anonymously post about others like that," Tohill added "At Muhlenberg College the way that Yik Yak has been used is to tear others down, and I for one am for building others up."

Chris Rubingh '24 has similar feelings about Yik Yak. In fact, he jokes that he has "outlawed" Yik Yak in his Village apartment, meaning that no one in the apart-

ment is allowed to talk about the app or the content on it.

"I find it to be unproductive. I hear a lot of times people say 'Oh, I just downloaded it, I don't post on it.' But if you downloaded it, you're already part of the problem," says Rubingh. "If you download it you might as well be posting on it and saying nasty things. If you have the app on your phone, you are as responsible as anyone with the app posting or downvoting. If I don't respect anyone who would post an inquiry on Yik Yak, then why would I care what they say about me? So, if anyone sends me anything I say, 'No, I don't wanna see it.'"

Despite all that's wrong with Yik Yak, there are some elements that are useful, which influences the impact it has on campus culture. Allie Willhouse, '23 shares, "Yik Yak simultaneously unites and divides students. If the administration does something that makes students feel unhappy, it is a place where we can look to each other for support. On the other hand, if hateful comments are made towards an individual or a marginalized identity, it can further divide the relationships students have with one another on this campus."

Now, instead of sending out emails discouraging students from using Yik Yak, offices on campus are using its anonymity and unfiltered nature to their advantage. Willhouse has an on-campus job as the Wood Dining Commons intern. "In my internship, I monitor comments made by students and report them to my supervisor," she says. "At first, I was shocked that this was a part of my job. However, it is clear that Yik Yak has become a forum

for students to provide anonymous, unfiltered feedback to the administration."

Karmen Brown began working as the director of prevention education in August 2022. Stepping into this role amidst the Yik Yak issue meant that she had to familiarize herself with the app quite quickly.

"I am on it primarily as a method to make sure that I am keeping up to date with things that might impact my job specifically. I'll scroll through it every now and again just to see what's generally being talked about, particularly when there are big things going on on campus or if something specific has happened," says Brown. "One of the big things that I look for on it is specifically people calling out other individuals' names in terms of that they harmed someone. It also informs me as to what I might create programs on. Do I wish that it was the way I was finding things out? No. But, it is helpful sometimes to be able to guide my work."

There is no way to know whether or not Yik Yak is here to stay, or if it is a fad that will die out just as it did in 2013. The College continues to closely monitor harmful, defamatory or untruthful posts about students. The administration is walking the fine line between working with Yik Yak, while also treating it as the serious threat it has shown potential to be.

*Isabel Molettieri is a Theatre and Music double major in Muhlenberg College's class of 2023 and wrote this story for the class Writing for the Media.*

## Getting to know Christian Johansson

BY MATTHEW KLINGER  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The commencement speaker for the 2023 Muhlenberg Graduate and Continuing Education ceremony has been named, and it is Christian Johansson '23. Johansson, who got his undergraduate degree in chemistry from Muhlenberg, decided to get his master's in applied analytics from the College as well.

When asked about how he was chosen to be the speaker, he said "I had a scheduled appointment with my Continuing Education Program advisor to go over questions regarding the May commencement ceremony. During that conversa-

tion, I was told that they had been following my academic progress and they made the offer to speak at the ceremony."

According to Johansson,

**"it was quite flattering to be chosen for the opportunity and unexpected. I knew it would mean a lot to my family and give myself the chance to thank the program for its support all these years."**

While he does not have a concrete idea of what he will speak about yet, he has some ideas and key points he wants to hit on. Ultimately, Johansson said that he wants "My college reflections to show the non-traditional perspective of being an adult college student, while highlighting the lengths the College goes to to provide ease of access and assistance like myself."



BY SABEEN SAFI  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

## Student Government election results

The Student Government Association (SGA) has announced the outcome of the 2023 General Election, which took place on Apr. 23 and 24. Over 20 students ran for election, eager to serve as leaders

of Muhlenberg's student community, and 650 students cast their votes to elect new leaders.

The elected executive board are as follows:

President: Jake Forstein '24

Vice President: Andrew Buckwalter '24

Treasurer: Evan Lipman '24

SEE RESULTS PAGE 4



## FROM RESULTS PAGE 3

Director of Communications: Margery Leit '24

Recording Secretary: Noah Berger '24

Campus Engagement Chair: Aidan Silvestri '25

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Chair: Bethany Qian '25

Jake Forstein '24 is majoring in biochemistry on the pre-med track. Throughout their campaign, Forstein emphasized the pillars of communication, support and advocacy. Forstein states, "a new ad-hoc [is] in the work[s] focused on supporting commuter students, with one of our new representatives, Vivian Jaber '24, set to chair the committee," as part of his advocacy efforts. He plans to support club leaders by starting a club president support group, "where club leaders can meet to collaborate, give each other advice and just build a network on campus." They also plan to support students by increasing wages, lowering GQ prices and increasing access to menstrual products and contraceptives on campus. Forstein would like to create SGA town halls "dedicated to hearing feedback from students and discovering big issues facing the student body."

Andrew Buckwalter '24 is double majoring in anthropology and history. He is involved with the musical improv comedy group TBD, the Muhlenberg Comedy Association and Too Much Light. While running unopposed, Buckwalter learned "how passionate Muhlenberg students are when it comes to topics they care about." He aims to make requesting funds from SGA less intimidating and improve the accessibility and clarity of the bylaws for both SGA and non-SGA members.

## FROM CLASS SIZES PAGE 1

how on the current events side of things."

The class was canceled due to an enrollment of two students as of Apr. 22 last spring. Billich said "It's definitely concerning to know that only two people sign up for the course that's a 400-level, and covers that socio-cultural requirement. I think one of the things that contributed to it was the lack of GAR integration, I think that's a big selling point for a lot of classes. In psych, there's some other 400-level classes like poverty, risk and resilience, it's a DE, an IL, a 400-level psych class and it contributes to the developmental processes, requirements, so it's killing four birds with one stone."

Furge shined a light on some statistics over the past few years, "In the fall of '21, we had five classes out of the roughly 750 that were offered... that had more than 40 students. We had four that had 30 to 40 students, we had eight that had 26 to 29. Or in short, 17 out of about 750 classes had more than 25 students... Only 2 percent, 2 percent of our total classes have even more than 25 students. 25 students is a small class. We taught 427 classes, or 50 percent of our classes, half of them had 10 to 20 students, which is a really terrific size. And then we had 16 percent of our classes or 128 that had fewer than 10, [they] had six to 10."

In response to being asked if the need to bring the faculty to student ratio back to 10:1 is financial, Furge responded, "Certainly, that is part of it. If you look at any kind of institution that we compare

PHOTO COURTESY OF SABEEN SAFI '26



Outgoing 2022-2023 Student Government Association.

Evan Lipman '24 is majoring in biology and minoring in public health on the pre-med track. He is involved in Alpha Phi Omega (APO) and Alpha Epsilon Delta (AED). This upcoming year will be Lipman's second year serving as treasurer. While the responsibilities of the finance committee are set, new goals were created. Lipman states, "One goal I have for my committee for the upcoming year is to continue our efforts in planning and implementing a Red Door revamp." Additionally, he hopes to enhance the visibility of SGA's financial resources among the student body by organizing various outreach efforts.

Margery Leit '24 is pursuing a double major in theater and philosophy. Outside of SGA, you can find her performing with various groups on campus, tutoring Spanish and being a member of APO. Leit states, "I want to make sure that SGA is

being as transparent as possible with our work so that we can really make this coming year as successful as possible for all of us." She is excited to have the opportunity to work directly with students in a fun and informative way. As this is Leit's last year at Muhlenberg, she says she is "excited to just be getting myself involved with everything I can on campus to make great memories with even better people."

Noah Berger '24 is pursuing media & communications and Jewish studies. Currently studying abroad in Dublin, Ireland, he is also gaining real work experience through an internship. Berger is excited about the role, "as it has expanded immensely since when I joined SGA in the fall of my sophomore year." He looks forward to continuing working with the voting database and the ambassador program while "thinking of new ways to encourage and allow students on Muhlenberg's cam-

"It was really, really frustrating. I had partially planned my schedule around these courses. I had made sure that I was going to be able to get requirements completed with them or just continue my education or my training in something that I was excited about as an elective through them, and it also meant that I was forced to scramble to find classes that could fill those spaces in my course load, whether that be meeting at the same time or just filling the requirement or elective that I was trying to fill."

Hussain had a similar experience, "It was between Governments and Politics of South Asia and Gender, Politics and Policy. I pick[ed] government and politics of South Asia, and then that got canceled. And by the time I went to go register again, Gender, Politics and Policy was full and all of the spots were taken."

Jake Suesserman '23 echoed "I wish that the school had allowed us to have backup classes ready to go in Workday so that we would not have had to scramble trying to make another class fit within our schedule, especially for people who may have needed that class for a major."

Despite the fact that some believe that classes below a certain size aren't ideal, many assert that there would still be value in running them.

Hussain says, "I want to take Government and Politics of South Asia. As someone who is South Asian, that's so interesting. And there's no class that's focusing on South Asian politics. So that was so disappointing, and now I see it's available

pus to ensure that they know SGA is a resource for them individually, but also for the organizations that they are a part of."

Aidan Silvestri '25 is majoring in media & communications. A few of her involvements on campus are Body Positive Club, MINT\* Hip Hop Team, Delta Zeta, Tour Guide, Tutor Program and Summer Advising. She has spent the past year on the campus engagement committee and credits Danny Burden '23 for "being such an amazing mentor and guide." Silvestri is excited "for the Udder Bar Challenge and continuing our More Accessible Muhlenberg project!"

Bethany Qian '25 is pursuing a theater major with a minor in business. To list a few of their involvements, she is on the executive board of the Asian Students Association and the Emerging Leaders Council. In addition, Qian is a Muhlenberg Scholar, a member of the Noteworthy a cappella group and is currently the RA for the gender inclusive floor in Walz Hall. Qian was motivated to apply through frustration; they say, "I've seen and experienced what it's like to be a marginalized identity here, and there are significant changes to be made." She plans to work with the Office of Admissions to ensure diversity within the student body and work with the Office of Multicultural Life (OML) to "ensure effective operations and longevity."

Welcome the new administration and say farewell to the old one by joining SGA at the inauguration on May 5, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. in Parent's Plaza.

*Any response from a representative only reflects their personal opinion and not the official stance of SGA as an organization.*

again for next semester and I'm not taking it because I can't."

Suesserman had originally registered for Hashim's class when it was first offered, but is graduating and will not be able to take it when it's offered again. He said, "I would have taken the class with five students because I loved taking classes with Dr. Hashim."

Billich echoed the sentiment with regard to Contemporary Racism, saying, "I would have loved to still take it. But just with overall logistics, it would have never been run. But if it was, I would have taken it because I really wanted to."

"It's one thing to say to make more with less or make do with less, but we are also an institution of higher learning and in a globalized world," said Hashim. "And when we have exposed our racism and ethnocentrism here in the United States, we need to reconfigure our understanding and critically inquire about our engagement with the rest of the world."

In reference to Muhlenberg, Hashim says, "This is the new reality, with a shrunk student body, we are trying to meet a minimum of eight students per class threshold because of financial exigencies or constraints. So, what does that do to the academic mission and objective of the College? I don't quite know."



# 175 years later...

BY MATTHEW BARESH  
NEWS EDITOR

Muhlenberg hosted a variety of events this past weekend in honor of its 175th anniversary. Founded in 1848, the College has undergone many changes to make it the institution it is today. These changes can be observed in the “History of Muhlenberg Exhibition” located in the Light Lounge of Seegers Union. The exhibition includes historical images and artifacts from the College’s archives to display the progress made over the past 175 years.

The weekend of festivities began on Friday, Apr. 28 with a speech from keynote speaker Leo M. Lambert, president emeritus and professor at Elon University. He discussed “how campuses are refocusing on the importance of human

relationship to student success,” according to the College’s website. Additionally, Lambert talked about his co-authored book “Relationship-Rich Education” and discussed the current education system. Following the speech was a ribbon-cutting ceremony for Fahy Commons, commemorating the strides the College has made toward a more sustainable future. Later that night, a gala was held in the Wood Dining Commons to celebrate the College’s history and the Boundless campaign. Many guests spoke at the gala after receiving a selective invitation. At the gala, a \$15 million donation, the largest in college history, was announced as a gift from the family of Ed and Lois Robertson (the benefactors of Robertson Hall). It was also announced that the goal for the Boundless Campaign has been increased to \$125 million. Saturday concluded with

a reception for the entire campus, including a themed dessert bar, music and dancing. A “barcade” was also available in the Event Space where students could play nostalgic arcade games such as PacMan or MarioKart while enjoying alcoholic beverages for those of the legal drinking age.

Saturday began with a campus festival in the Life Sports Center including a roller skating rink, flower bouquets, inflatable activities and various student performances. “I enjoyed the free shirts and I thought making the flower bouquets was really nice, and it’s still currently sitting in my dorm,” said Sophie Yellis ‘25. A scholarship reception was held around the same time to recognize the impact that donors have on the lives of students at the College. The event was held to connect donors with the students



who received their scholarships. Comedian Adam Conover closed the night with a comedy show in the Event Space. The hit star of the “Adam Ruins Everything” series amused students and faculty with his witty nature.

The celebratory weekend concluded on Sunday with an honors convocation for students, faculty and staff who have displayed academic excellence or leadership in their roles.

The weekend marked the last major timestamp before the 200th anniversary of Muhlenberg, 25 years from now.

## Parking: fees and far walks

BY CYDNEY WILSON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Parking on campus has been a long-term headache for faculty, staff and students alike.

Tickets are issued frequently, leading one to wonder: how much does the College make from tickets, and where does this money go?

Chief Business Officer and Treasurer Kent Dyer shared that “Parking ticket funds go into the College general fund to support the overall College budget. They are part of the overall budget which covers all aspects of the student experience from student services (i.e. counseling, health center, Academic Resource Center) to academic/curricular expenses and student programming to financial aid.”

In Sep. 2021, Dyer shared that “For the past few years, annual parking fines were about \$4,000.”

Dean of Students Allison Williams acknowledges that parking on campus isn’t perfect, “Parking on all college campuses is an ongoing challenge. Muhlenberg is no exception and we continue to monitor parking conditions to see what adjustments can be made. That said, we have more available parking currently than we have in years past given that our enrollment currently is slightly less than it has been in several years and the College has several more employees working remotely more often.”

However, Dyer shared that “parking fine revenues are at \$7,600 for this academic year.” So, despite decreasing enrollment, increased revenue is being garnered by parking tickets.

Many students and staff are infuriated by the lack of parking on campus, Emily Orlich ‘24 says there is “not enough!” While Grace Oddo ‘22 says, “This campus needs a parking garage.”

Williams says, “Some important reminders for all of us are that unless someone is disabled, Muhlenberg (and colleges much bigger than ours) is a walkable campus, even for most students living in

MILES and off-campus. We need to all work to park in the lots designated for us and to walk between spaces on campus more frequently.”

One anonymous source says, “No one walks further than 10 minutes... Walk to class.”

SGA President Ben Eber ‘23 echoes this sentiment, saying “I understand the annoyance of having to park in Hoffman when you live in Brown but I do encourage people to walk and get our steps up. I encourage the campus to think about accessible parking for people with mobility issues.”

It is important to note that there are currently no designated parking spots for the health center, making trips to the health center difficult for those who are ill or have mobility issues.

Commuter parking is another major issue faced by a significant number of students on campus.

Vivian Jaber ‘24 says, “All students pay the parking registration fee to have cars on campus, but... residents don’t need to move their cars multiple times a day, every day. Some people leave their cars in the same parking spot for days. With commuters, there’s no guarantee that you’ll get a spot in the student parking lots, and with street cleaning Wednesdays and Thursdays even street parking becomes an issue.”

Williams acknowledges this issue, saying “We are working closely with Vivian Jaber and SGA to look at commuter student parking. Just as the survey results demonstrate, it is a major challenge for commuters when they have to plan significant additional time into their day for parking in order to attend class, workshops, etc. That directly impacts their academic experience and must be addressed immediately.”

Students also complain about having to purchase parking passes but without any guarantee they will be able to find parking. “It’s very annoying not being able to use the parking near my dorm building, and then still not having parking elsewhere, despite paying for a parking

pass,” says Anna Hanley ‘25.

Williams says, “that also relies on students not bringing their cars if they are not registered, all of us being willing to park in the lots designated to us, and being willing to walk even when we might rather drive and park right outside the door of wherever we are headed. Like I said, we are working to overhaul the parking system which will allow for better registration, better designation of locations and potentially a couple of additional lo-

cations, and better enforcement of parking rules on campus.”

However, better enforcement of parking rules is likely to mean more tickets for students, another major source of frustration.

Gabe Sherman ‘23 says finding parking is “impossible, then when I find a spot I get a ticket.”

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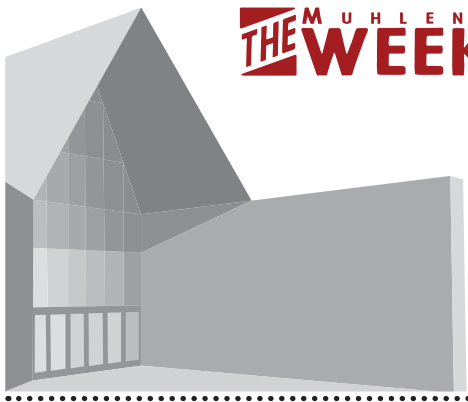
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"I am seeking, I am striving, I am in it with all my heart."

- Vincent Van Gogh

# Dance Emerge, ending the spring 2023 departmental season

BY AMY SWARTZ  
STAFF WRITER

The Muhlenberg dance department closed out the season with "Dance Emerge" which hit the stage this past weekend, Apr. 28-30, in the Studio Theatre. All ten pieces were student choreographed and student performed, making for a production that truly highlighted the passion and talents of dance students. Dance styles that were featured in the show included contemporary, jazz, tap, hip-hop, modern and improvisation.

The student choreographers had the opportunity to use the Studio Theatre as a space to help further their intended messages that they chose to portray with their pieces. The choreographers for Dance Emerge were Jane Carney '24, Erika Dubin '23, Nicola Ferro '23, Sarah Gwiazda '23, Riley Hammett '24, Dani Medvedovski '24, Bella Pansera '23, Grace Sellinger '23, Claire Spenard '23 and Hannah Warren '23. Chris Rubingh '24 was the associate artistic director.

The use of the Studio Theater was a huge part of Dance Emerge becoming the final product that it was. Rubingh honed

in on the importance of the space that was used. "I think what drew me to be a part of this project was really the use of the Studio Theatre, this really opened up an opportunity for us to try to create a totally different dance experience from what we have seen before. We wanted to create a concert where pieces were not adapted, but made for the space. That studio was really the first building block for shaping our whole idea and concept behind this year's Emerge. We were really looking for as many unique and specific pieces as possible and the choreographers rose far above the occasion. We wanted to try not to hold onto what had been done in the past, in any dance space, but to open doors for the future."

Artistic Director and Adjunct Professor of Dance Lisa Busfield discussed the idea of having a specific message that the audience was expected to come away with having gained. Busfield said that "No, there was not a specific message we wanted to convey for the concert as a whole. Rather, really allow our choreographers and dancers freedom to explore and investigate new means of dance creation. Each choreographer submits a proposal for a piece they are interested in explor-

PICTURE BY LINDSAY SHERRICK '25



Claire Spenard's Dance Emerge piece "Dirty Numb Angels."

ing and creating at the beginning of the semester. In the selection process for this concert, we were really interested in integrating a variety of personal, social and psychological topics, movement styles and cultivating engagement with each piece." This varied approach to representing dances and dance styles that do not fit into one mold, or are meant to create one uniform conclusion, allowed "Emerge," and all of its dancers and choreographers to have a level of creative freedom to highlight their individuality as dancers and as people.

Maria Wetzel '26, dancer in the piece "Dirty Numb Angels," discussed what she has learned and enjoyed so much, as being a first-year student in the dance department. "My favorite part of the process was the people I got to work with. Claire (my choreographer) and everyone in my cast was so creative and talented. To create the piece we didn't just come into rehearsal and learn the choreography, we also played games and explored with improvisation and eventually it all came together. Working on this piece has shown me that the process of creating a dance doesn't have to look a certain way."

As a senior dance student, "Dance

Emerge" was Gwiazda's last show at Muhlenberg. When asked to reflect on her time in the program, she took a step back to contemplate. "As I look back on the past four years, the Muhlenberg dance department is a family. I remember during my very first show, 'Moving Stories '19,' was when I felt like I was at home on this campus. There is a huge sense of community and support within the department, allowing for students to grow into the artists they had once dreamed of becoming. Between the faculty and fellow peers, I have always felt like I have something special that makes me unique in my artistic ability. The Muhlenberg dance department has impacted me in ways I didn't know possible, I'm forever grateful for my experiences, the lessons I've learned and the amazing people I have met along the way."

With "Dance Emerge" being the last Muhlenberg production for many senior dancers and choreographers that have spent years within the program, it was definitely a show with intense sentimentality for all. This personal sincerity bled through onto the stage, with every single performance bursting at the seams with enormous passion.

## Faculty spotlight: Vincent Trovato

BY DANNY MILKIS  
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

From his dedication and involvement in decades of departmental musical theatre productions, focused feedback and support for instrumental music students in his one-on-one applied piano lessons and accompaniment for vocal ensembles and vocal senior recitals, staff accompanist Vincent (Vinny) Trovato has been a pillar of Muhlenberg's artistic community, and a resource for folks on campus who value continuing dedication, personability and quality in Muhlenberg's music education.

"I definitely do connect with my colleagues on staff, but if I'm being honest, I'm sixty-one, and I connect best with the students I teach," said Trovato. "It's a very special student body, and over the

years I've been able to meet some great people doing shows and helping with ensembles"

Trovato has worked with the theatre department a number of times during his career at Muhlenberg, taking on the role of musical director on a number of mainstage musical theatre productions, including "Miss You Like Hell" by Quiara Alegria Hudes during the spring 2022 season, Kurt Weill's "The Threepenny Opera" in the fall 2022 season, and Stephen Sondheim's "Into the Woods" during the fall 2019 season, most recently.

When asked what his favorite music directing experience at Muhlenberg was, Trovato explained that his two favorite moments were the department of theatre and dance's summer music theatre (SMT) production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Evita," which he explained gave him his

first opportunity to conduct during a live show, as well as the department's spring 2022 mainstage production of "Miss You Like Hell," in which he took on the role of music director.

One of Trovato's most challenging moments as an accompanist at Muhlenberg took place over the course of a few semesters, when the Muhlenberg chamber singers took on the challenging task of performing Jonathan Dove's choral setting of the Alfred Lord Tennyson poem, "Ring Out, Wild Bells," for two SATB (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) choirs and piano.

Trovato said, on accompanying this piece, that "[Dove] always writes chaotic pieces. This one though, I played it as written, but it made me do some things that strayed so far from what pianists are ever asked to do, it just flies around everywhere."

On the other hand, Trovato explained that a defining experience at Muhlenberg was the work he did with the cast and pit of "Into the Woods" in 2019,

"Oh 'Into the Woods' was a fun one for sure," said Trovato. "Of all the shows I would have to say that working on that one had to be the most rewarding."

Trovato hopes for a continued fruitful future in music-making with the student and staff population, and reinstates the values that have made his Muhlenberg experience so rewarding in the context of an upcoming decline in enrollment for the College:

"With what the College is going through right now, I'd love to have a job in the future," said Trovato. "But otherwise, I'm hopeful for more of the same-meeting new people, making music and bringing music to as many people as we can."



# Artist spotlight: Lily Knowles '23

BY ANNA BOBOK  
STAFF WRITER

Dance major Lily Knowles '23 will be graduating Muhlenberg in just a few weeks, taking with her years of rich experiences in performance, education and choreography that she's ready to share with her community.

Knowles started dancing between the ages of eight and nine years old, predominantly using her talent for musical theatre. So when it came time to seek out college programs, she auditioned for Bachelor of Fine Arts. "I didn't know going to school for dance was really an option," Knowles said. Not finding a fit, she decided to try Muhlenberg for its flexibility and Bachelor of Arts program. "I think I probably knew deep down theatre might not be my designated path, which ended up being true."

Taking on the "classic combo" of a theatre and dance double major with a minor in music, Knowles started her college career taking Dance Technique and Performance in her first year. "That course alone changed the trajectory of college for me entirely," Knowles said, and with that, she decided to focus her studies entirely on dance.

Since then, Knowles has been constantly pushing past her own expectations and limitations in dance. From tackling dance over Zoom during COVID to working with chance operations for a piece in Dance Emerge this past weekend, Knowles' performances at the College have been truly innovative and groundbreaking. Those that she is most proud of, however, are works of dance activism, in-

cluding the story-based piece "Channels" for "In Motion" '23 and the first staging of guest artist Earl Mosley's piece "UNCONQUERED" last spring, which excited Knowles for its combination of multiple forms of art, like her personal interest in poetry.

Knowles has recently become a choreographic artist on this campus, which she was initially hesitant to tackle because of her focus on performance. She admired seniors who choreographed works but didn't see it as something for her until she took Dance Composition in her junior year, which aimed to help students discover their "choreographic voice." "It wasn't something I was super comfortable in," Knowles admitted. "but I knew I wanted to keep pushing because it was something I knew I'd be proud of myself for doing."

Last fall, she continued choreographing through Advanced Dance Composition, where it was recommended that she submit an idea for "Reset: New Dances." She had danced in the show in its first iteration, where the premise was a "reset" after COVID. So, she decided to take a different approach in conceiving her piece: "I ended up taking the idea of new beginnings and fresh starts super literally and I decided to do a piece about sleep."

Knowles' piece "Snooze" was accepted and performed at "Reset" in Fall 2022 with a cast of four, including Izabella Paz '23, Allie Gleeson '23, Emily Bassett '22 and Maddi Miller '23. "My cast was phenomenal," Knowles beamed. "Being a choreographer and having that sense of authority is difficult, especially when you're with your friends, but I had a great

group...work and play were pretty balanced."

Through taking more classes at Muhlenberg, Knowles realized she also had a passion for dance education. She has been taking Community Dance and Practice, which is an initiative through the Dance Department and the Office of Community Engagement that seeks to ensure Muhlenberg Elementary students have access to dance classes. Through the program, Knowles has been teaching creative dance to 2nd and 3rd grade students for the past two years. She also recently started teaching at the Muhlenberg Community Dance Center, where she assistant taught adult ballet classes and currently teaches a Ballet I class for 7-9 year olds.

These experiences made it clear to Knowles that her focus after college should be dance education, and she already has plans to choreograph her middle school's production of "Singin' in the Rain" and teach at her home dance studio, bringing her journey full-circle. "I feel ready to teach, I'm confident in my abilities as a teacher," Knowles said. "I've been lucky to have lots of faculty members who know what they're doing, are fantastic educators, and have been really great role models, such as Natalie Gotter, Heidi Cruz-Austin—#namedrop—and so I'm really excited to be utilizing my teaching skills." Knowles noted that so many people often don't get the opportunity to use their degree so fast, so she feels incredibly lucky that so many people trust in her and her talents.

Knowles also plans to travel to Philadelphia on occasion, where she can take dance classes, audition, network and see

what the Philly dance scene has to offer. "I do wanna end up there," Knowles said, "whether it be auditioning for companies to utilize my performance concentration or teaching in the city." Knowles has thought of going to graduate school for dance education as well, and she's excited for what her current future holds.

If you missed Lily in "Dance Emerge" or want to see the many other artistic talents she has to offer, she will be giving her final performance with the long-form musical improv group To Be Determined on May 4 at 11 p.m. and singing her senior song with acapella group Noteworthy on May 7 at 7:30 p.m. Or you can catch her barista talents on display at Java Joe. "I think being able to do other things besides dance helps to find more beauty in dance," Knowles said. "There's awesome opportunities here. Take all of them. Make art. Be in art. Talk with people about art. And really get the most that you can out of this because there's really no other time you're gonna get the education you are [getting] here."



PHOTO COURTESY OF LILY KNOWLES '23

## So You Think 'Berg Can Dance

BY DANNY MILKIS  
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

This coming Friday, May 5, 2023 at 11:59pm, the Muhlenberg Theatre Association (MTA) will be hosting the first "So You Think 'Berg Can Dance" competition in the Seegers Union Event Space. Inspired by the hit Fox reality competition, "Dancing With The Stars," representatives from each performance ensemble and each a cappella group on campus will pair up with a seasoned Muhlenberg dancer to perform a duet in a unique dance style.

The teams are being announced one-by-one throughout the week, but the announced pairings include Lindsay Sherrick '25 and Julia De Vita '23 representing Team Dynamics; Lily Knowles '23 and Joe Grisanzio '23 representing Team Songcycle; Kayla Grammerstorf '24 and Dylan DeMagistris '24 representing Team Noteworthy; Katrina Binks '24 and Nate Stratton '23 representing team Acafellas; Keanna Peña '25 and Joey Marcacci '23 representing Team M.I.A. (Muhlenberg Improv Association); and Grace Sellinger '25 and Jules Curtis '25 representing Team G.A.S.P. (Great American Songbook Proj-



PHOTO BY MADDIE CILIENTO

So You Think 'Berg Can Dance's duos in their team colors. ect).

Each of the duos is assigned a color, and in order to show support for a team, audience members have been instructed through the MTA's social media to wear the designated color of the team they wish to represent.

The competition will feature duos taking on a wide variety of dance genres and

styles, including jazz, heels, ballet, hip-hop, step and K-pop, with even more to be announced as the week progresses.

"I'm excited to see everyone's work and get to witness a variety of dance styles on display," said Grisanzio. "The range of charities being supported is also fantastic, and will be extremely beneficial across the board regardless of who wins."

Proceeds from the event will be donated to charities, and each duo will decide upon a different organization to support during the event. Some of the organizations the event will be supporting include the Ashley Hope Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, Broadway for Racial Justice, The Lunchbox Fund, The Trevor Project and DDing Dong LGBTQ Youth Support Center.

"I'm most looking forward to performing and showing that if you really dedicate yourself, you can dance," explained Peña, about her performance with Marcacci. "I'm really excited to perform with Joey. He's really fun to work with and is dedicated to putting on a good performance and practicing. It's lovely to work with someone who really respects this art form and respects its cultural significance and background."

Knowles explained, "I'm most excited to see dance extending to people who maybe don't typically take a dance class or are involved with the program. It's a really awesome chance to bring people together with a fun and supportive competition for charity."



# TO THE EDITOR:

I was astonished to recently read a published article in the WEEKLY entitled "Student experiences in Muhlenberg's education department." I say astonished for several reasons. The anonymous nature of the piece seems to lend an aura of suspicion to the article and therefore less credibility, as well as its clear intent to inflict damage to an academic department of the College.

There is no doubt that students have a range of experiences with the College's curriculum, professors and courses and have ample opportunity to evaluate these experiences every semester in many ways ranging from formal to informal evaluation processes. But I was not aware that using the Weekly as a platform for complaint and at times vague and mean-spirited attacks was one of them.

I must note that I do not know this student at all nor any of the particulars of her situation. And she is certainly entitled to her opinions (apparently there are many) as well as those expressed by her anonymous "sources". These complaints range from the department's faculty discouraging student efforts and commitment to

bringing down the academic excellence of the institution as a whole. Weighty indeed.

Yet while doing this she admits that the standards for teacher certification at Muhlenberg are high and the time commitment intensive. I have no intention of countering these complaints one by one. Beyond her shortcomings that she herself cites (missing mandatory meetings, failing an education course) I do not know her particular case. But there are several things I do know and know very well as I served as a professor in the Education Department for 36 years and lead the Department for a fair number of them.

Here is what I know.

I know that the faculty of the department are dedicated and caring professionals to a person. They work exceptionally hard in a compassionate way to hold students to very high standards in pursuit of a professional license. They advise carefully and communicate honestly and clearly with the students as to course scheduling, requirements, and their individual progress. There would be few departments who do it any better!

I know that the faculty is superbly qualified in their work and strive to remain active in their fields of study and the world of public education.

I know the long hours the department as a whole and as individual faculty spends in evaluating, mentoring, and supporting students on their path to becoming teachers. This sometimes requires honest and forthright conversations with students about performance and areas requiring growth and attention. I am certain this is the case in every academic department at Muhlenberg College.

And I also know one more important thing. There are often two sides to every story. Students have every right to evaluate, complain and voice their concerns. I also might suggest there are more responsible and fruitful ways than this young adult chose in this instance to bring about change.

I think she got it right when she wrote, "Education is going to be hard, and students need to be equipped to be teachers" Sadly she does not seem to understand what that really means.

Michael Carbone, Ph.D. Professor of Education, Muhlenberg College, Emeritus

*This was published as it was received, and not edited for grammatical errors.*

## OP/ED POLICIES

### EDITORIAL POLICY

In each edition of the newspaper, The Muhlenberg Weekly publishes an unsigned staff editorial written by the senior editors. Any such editorials that appear without a byline represents the majority opinion of the Editorial Board and thus, are the official opinion of The Weekly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is the policy of The Muhlenberg Weekly to foster relationships with its readership, including through discourse in its Opinion/Editorial section. Therefore, members of the College Community are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editor on any topic of interest to Muhlenberg, in direct reference to an article or otherwise. See our website for submission requirements.

### OPINION POLICY

The Muhlenberg Weekly views itself as an open forum for students to voice their opinions on all relevant topics. Opinions expressed in the Op/Ed section of this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Weekly or Muhlenberg College.

### GUEST SUBMISSIONS

The Weekly also invites guest opinion submissions if the author believes that more than 250 words are warranted. Individuals looking to submit such an article should contact the Opinion/Editorial editor (bergweeklyoped@gmail.com) or the Editor-in-Chief (weeklyeditor@gmail.com) to discuss the topic. The Weekly does not guarantee publication of guest submissions.

# Fraternity life at Muhlenberg

## A conversation with Patrick Carmody '23

BY SHINAM HUSSAIN  
ASSISTANT ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

The conversation surrounding Greek life at Muhlenberg has always been unique. There is a common idea that since Muhlenberg is a small college, Greek life here is different than at bigger state schools. In order to fully understand this sentiment and if there is reality behind it, I sat down with Patrick Carmody '23 and gauged his thoughts on Greek life at Muhlenberg.

Carmody is a member of the fraternity Alpha Tau Omega (ATO) and has served as Academic Chair, Philanthropy Chair, Social Chair and President of ATO during his three years as a member. With such heavy involvement in his fraternity, Carmody was able to gain insight on fraternity life at Muhlenberg, and how it may differ from other colleges. When asked why he originally joined ATO and if he would have joined a fraternity no matter where he went to college, Carmody responded, "I didn't plan on joining a fraternity when I came to college. Fraternities here aren't like fraternities at other schools, they're like, 'fake fraternities.' We don't really have a lot of social power, so it's more like a group of friends more than anything. It's not some big construct with the ability to affect social life, like other schools. And it's not as intense, it's very 'laxed.'"

Even though Greek life at Muhlenberg is said to be different, the inherent advantages that come with being a member are still true to fraternities and sorori-

ties at Muhlenberg. If you can afford the amount of money it costs to be a part of a Greek life organization, the connections that being a part of a fraternity or sorority provide individuals are connections that can carry on to future employment opportunities, or can look valuable on a person's resume.

"It's definitely a resume builder. If you want to be involved in a philanthropy, you can do that through Greek life. If you want a leadership position, you can do that. There's also the classic joke of 'paying for friends' and there's obviously some truth to that. I've met people I otherwise wouldn't have," said Carmody.

Carmody speaks on the different advantages being a member of ATO were able to provide him, stating, "I didn't decide to be president, it was more so decided for me. When I started thinking about it, I knew it was good for my resume. The life experience also, I think if I wasn't president, I would be a lot less prepared for the real world. You have to manage 35 to 40 other people. You have to manage the lease of the house, the rent, you have to manage the money that's coming in, who gets paid, when they get paid, doing the taxes, managing the guys. It personally prepared me for a lot."

In order to be a part of a fraternity, there are hundreds of dollars worth of dues you need to pay. This is one of the greatest systemic barriers and disadvantages that come about from Greek life and is intrinsic to fraternities, even at Muhlenberg. Carmody speaks about the semesterly dues members need to pay, saying, "Us [ATO] compared to other fraternities at state schools aren't too bad, where they have dues of 1,000 dollars a

semester. Other fraternities around here are about 800, and [to be a part of ATO it's] about 400 dollars a semester. And where all that money is going is to nationals. The semesterly dues [start at] 250 dollars a semester, and then they sneak in convention fees that are 1,500 every three months and so we collect local dues, which we collect 150 dollars to pay for."

Carmody speaks about how the national organization has a heavy hand in how the fraternity operates saying, "[I think] our national organization is one of the worst things that's ever been created. They just make your life awful. And in 2019, there was a member at Washington State that died from hazing, and the CEO of our fraternity gave an interview for '60 Minutes.' It was one of the most incompetent interviews I've ever seen, giving the worst excuses, and not taking accountability for anything."

Carmody refers to the death of Sam Martinez, a 19 year-old who was pledging ATO at Washington State University in 2019. After attending a Big-Little event hosted by ATO in November of 2019, Martinez was given a half gallon of alcohol, which is the equivalent of 40 shots, by his "big" which caused him to pass away from alcohol poisoning. In wake of this tragic death, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of ATO's National Fraternity Organization, Wynn Smiley went on '60 Minutes' and deflected responsibility stating, "When push comes to shove, the pledges can stand up and say no. I don't want to put that on them, because that wouldn't be fair."

A core aspect to fraternity life is hazing, and while it is frowned upon and officially denounced by many organiza-

tions, it still continues at many colleges. ATO has had a long history of hazing, and at Muhlenberg, its infamous history has been recorded in a documentary titled, "Frat House" released in 1998, even though ATO and Muhlenberg are not explicitly stated. In 2000, the fraternity had their charter revoked by the College due to hazing allegations in 1999. In more recent history, in 2019, ATO was suspended, again due to hazing related allegations and alcohol violations. When asked if the fraternity continues to haze, Carmody explained, "[We] definitely don't haze after 2019. Zero tolerance at this point. We have a new member education program, but it's just meeting the standards nationals want us to hit. So it's learning the history, the songs we sing and the traditions. But outside of that, we don't really do anything. We have them do activities together, but those are usually just like, do a scavenger hunt, we'll do it with you. Or let's go on a hike together. No one's forced to do anything."

"It's again the difference between fraternities at state schools and here. We go to Muhlenberg College, we don't need to be doing that. It's not that intense, we're basically a club. And it also comes back to, why would you want to do that to anybody? It just doesn't make any sense. And if you're willing to do that to someone you're claiming to be your friend, it gives a bad image of what you are and what you believe in," he added.

Carmody continued to speak about how ATO's national organization is where a lot of the deep rooted problems of the fraternity lay. He expresses, "I think the

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national fraternity is far worse. It's essentially a pyramid scheme. Because it's really adults taking advantage of kids being idiots, and kids partying, and monetizing that. And when things go bad, it's blaming the kids and not the overall organization and it's just a joke. They love to preach of it being a brotherhood and there are in-

trinsic values. But if something bad happens, they'll give an interview and say 'oh it's just a business, that was one person doing something bad, that's not our fault. We just supply the venues, it's not our problem.' And there's obviously something very problematic about that. You can't play both sides of the coin."

A main point Carmody articulated was that there are a lot of moving parts to

fraternity life, and fraternities at Muhlenberg are considerably different than the ones at larger colleges. He expressed, "We go to Muhlenberg, I've said it enough at this point. It's not that serious, it's not that intense. [Because of this] I don't think I would do well at a fraternity at a big state school."

When asked about the future of Greek life and ATO at Muhlenberg, Carmody ex-

pressed, "I think the future of ATO and Greek life in general are looking positive. While some membership numbers may be down I believe the most philanthropic money in a very long time had been raised, so that's a positive point, and that is something to always improve on."

# SENIOR OP/EDS

## The final Tuesday

BY CYDNEY WILSON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

If you had asked me four years ago as a senior in high school if I would write for my college newspaper, I would've said "I don't know, maybe, but probably not." At the activities fair when I signed up for The Weekly, I was unsure if I would ever actually write an article.

Today, I couldn't imagine my college experience without it, and this marks my 36th article. During my time, we've nearly doubled the size of our staff, created a section for marginalized artists to share their work (alongside Mustafa), and broadly caused quite a stir, more than once. We also ensured that The Weekly kept printing, maintaining the legacy of a paper that celebrates its' 140th birthday this year. I can't lie, and if you've ever spoken to me you'd know this, I'm pretty proud of what we've done here.

You might not know what goes into creating each issue of The Weekly, but it's quite literally the definition of a team effort. At one point, I deduced that each issue requires the participation of at least 60 students (when it comes down to writers, editors, photographers and those quoted). All of these efforts come together to produce around 16 stories each week, which our very dedicated managing/copy/layout editors stay up late (at our latest, until 4 a.m.) to compile into the neatly packaged issue you pick up on Thursdays (thank you Johnny, Sarah, Or-El, Katie, Bri, Keanna, Harry and more). Without each and every member of the staff, the paper would not be possible. I am beyond grateful for your commitment and dedication.

People often say "step out of your comfort zone," but I wonder how many people really do that. Honestly, I hadn't really planned on doing it either. Near the end of my freshman year, I had served as a news editor for a grueling 3 weeks when the EIC at the time pulled me aside and asked me to take on the role of leading the paper. I'll be honest and tell you that I said "no." I was young, anxious, and believe it or not, pretty shy, too. I was still finding my footing, and the newspaper was something I was just trying out. I did not feel ready to run the paper, and actually felt pretty certain I would run it into the ground.

And then, the pandemic hit (one day, there will be an issue of The Weekly where COVID isn't mentioned, today is not that day). In the fall of 2020, I received a call from Professor Sara Vigneri that there



was nobody who could step into the role, and the paper might cease to exist if I didn't take on editor-in-chief (in retrospect I think she was just really trying to convince me). Members of our staff often joke that there's not a hill I won't die on, so I reluctantly said yes, and thus began what would be a very long and somehow also lightning-fast nearly 3 years as EIC.

It's worth taking the time to thank Sara immensely for pushing me to take this on. I don't think she could've foreseen the plethora of frantic text messages, phone calls, rants and even an occasional invite to a meeting with administrative staff that she would receive when she made that fateful phone call (and I often wonder if she would've made the same choice had she known).

Over time, The Weekly has been party to a fair share of controversy. People have emptied our newsstands into garbage cans or dorm rooms, posted about us on a variety of social media platforms and we've received plenty of angry emails and direct messages. Sounds to me like we've done some pretty good journalism.

The Weekly was never part of my plan, but it quickly became a massive part of my Muhlenberg experience. I would not be who I am without it. To those who I know will continue to keep the paper afloat, there's still a lot of work to be done. Keep fighting to raise the minimum wage on campus, hold people accountable, create space for art and honesty and build community in our little basement office.

Honestly, I don't really know how to say goodbye. It's hard to believe that my Tuesday evenings are going to be wide open from here forward. Before The Weekly, I barely knew what journalism was, and now it's forever part of my life. To the people who made this office home, thank you, and I can't wait to see everything that all of you do.

## ACE is out

BY ALEX CABAN-ECHAVARRIA  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

The first time I walked into The Muhlenberg Weekly office, I was a junior. I became interested in journalism through taking my media and communication electives with Professor Sara Vigneri and thought it would be fun to try it outside the classroom. That fall felt like my freshman year—starting over again and meeting new people.

The previous managing editors took me under their wings, where I learned the ropes and even wrote some news pieces. When I started coming to production night, I loved the newsroom energy and sitting next to Kat Dickey. I made late-night rituals with Alex Blum, who gave me my nickname, "ACE." I thought it was so newsy, but it was probably because there couldn't be two Alexes.

I always knew I liked writing, but being a journalist came later, through an internship with Sara at the Allentown Voice. I wrote a long-form piece about evictions in Allentown, sparking my curiosity for community-centered reporting. I had a revelation; I could do this as a real job.

Throughout college, as an English and media and communication double major, I have prided myself in saying that I would never get a real job. But, through all this, I finally found something I could see myself actually doing.

I tasked myself with applying to grad schools, and starting this July will attend the Newhouse School at Syracuse University to study for my M.A. in Magazine, News and Digital Journalism. By taking classes in data reporting and multimedia, I will go outside my comfort zone (news-papers) and gain connections in the industry and beyond.

I don't know where I'll be a year from now, but I know I will miss The Weekly office the most. I will never forget all the time I spent here, especially with the people who helped me become the journalist I am today. Thank you Sara, for supporting me and always letting me do my thing. Thank you Cydney, for being both a friend and role model. There is nothing like your first college newspaper.

## Goodbye, Muhlenberg Weekly!

BY TOM HILLER  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

I'm so thankful for all the opportunities given to me by working for The Muhlenberg Weekly. For one of the first times at Muhlenberg, I was a part of something bigger than myself. I learned to work in a team with many talented and interesting people. The Weekly gave me hands-on experience, which has prepared me for future sports media work. I will miss so many things about The Weekly. I'll miss running upstairs to GQ with everyone, trying to buy as much food and drinks as we got each Tuesday with the secret \$10 GQ gift cards. I'll miss my walk back to my room in the middle of the night. Although I felt utterly exhausted during those walks, I also felt accomplished. Each Tuesday, I and everyone in that office surrendered their time to publish the voice of the students. Creating tangible media people can hold and appreciate made working those late Tuesday nights worth

it. It was more than just writing game recaps and chit chatting until two in the morning. We were helping to facilitate a platform for Muhlenberg students. I will miss the excitement I got each Thursday when I picked up the newspaper and saw my printed article. I know that the future of The Weekly is in good hands. To Cydney Wilson, Sara Vigneri, and Alex Blum, thank you for believing in me and accepting me onto The Weekly Team. And to Matthew Baker-Grunza, thank you for carrying on the Sports section after my departure. You are incredibly talented, and your work and dedication to the section have shown throughout this year!

Thank you, Weekly!



# SENIOR OP/EDS

## Reflections from a former four-year-old author

BY BECCA BAITEL  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

I'll never forget my first pencil grip—a vibrant green crocodile one with googly eyes bulging at its parallel sides. I can't remember if I named him Crocy or Christopher, but giving him some silly C-name, I carried that grip with me throughout childhood as I learned to write. When I struggled to verbally communicate and express myself given my countless years in speech therapy, writing always provided an outlet for me to do so. The innate excitement of building complex worlds and crafting characters became a vessel for my self-expression, spending hours at my typewriter (due to my laughably messy handwriting) clicking away. To this day, that typewriter has been the coolest gift I have ever received (thank you, Grandma Lil!). But somewhere along the line, that toothy-grinned, big-blue-eyed little girl with her head always shoved in a book grew up and gained the confidence to start sharing her work with the world. Whether that was reading poems or short stories at open mic nights or submitting work to school newspapers and outside publications, I became fully immersed in the world of storytelling and I knew I had to join The Weekly's staff once I arrived at college. With that same child-like glow in my eyes and the swift movement of my pen, The Weekly was the first organization I signed up for at the involvement fair back in 2019 and anxiously awaited my first assignment. Writing for The Weekly became part of my weekly routine and empowered me, teaching me that my voice and story matters. During remote learning, The Weekly granted me a sense of digital community



that I am still beyond grateful for to this day. Even when everything seems to be crashing and burning, this driven, kind and talented group of people has taught me the importance of storytelling and how it builds community, especially during the toughest of times.

As I look at my cap and gown hanging up at almost 23, I know that I will always hold this publication near and dear to my heart. I now reflect on how 70 percent of my courses at Muhlenberg were related to writing, and I have The Weekly to thank for reigniting that passion of mine. While I no longer have my crocodile pencil grip, what I have gained is a forever love for writing. To the Weekly staff and readers, thank you for believing in and supporting me and my work since I was 18. Perhaps I'll feature The Weekly in my memoir one day \*wink wink.\* While this chapter at the Weekly is coming to a close, I will never stop honing my curiosity, creativity, and imagination. Thank you for everything.

## Opening up to saying goodbye

BY MUSTAFA HALL  
OP/ED EDITOR

The first piece I wrote for The Muhlenberg Weekly was published on Oct. 31, 2019. It was titled, "Opening Up to Discomfort." It was about my experiences of being in a heavily white space, like Muhlenberg, as someone who was born and raised in Brooklyn. I remember seeing it in the paper and feeling so validated. I felt honored for not simply just being in the paper but for also paying homage to my people and where I come from. That day, I fell in love with storytelling. I fell in love with using my words to create bridges. I fell in love with using my experiences to help others feel less alone. When I reflect on my time at The Muhlenberg Weekly, I'm buoyed by a powerful feeling; the feeling of coveting a vessel. As a young Queer Black man at a PWI, I entered The Weekly needing a space to hold my emotions whilst giving air to its nuances. I also wanted to infuse this desire into the bones of the Op/Ed section. I told myself that I would dedicate this section to giving life to the stories of Queer voices and voices of color on this campus whilst fostering an environment of empathy. In short, being at The Muhlenberg Weekly has taught me the power of truth. To tell one's truth is to heal. To lean into the truth of who you are, you inherently give others the sacred permission to do so within themselves. Ultimately, I hope the Op/Ed section that I have constructed has acted as a sanctuary for those who simply want to be heard; I hope I was successful in cultivating a space where biases were challenged and understanding was birthed. For the past four years, The Muhlenberg Weekly has been my home. A



home where I could place my worries, my joys and the depths of my narrative into something safe. Into something gentle. I will forever treasure my time here. To be a member of this incredible staff has been a privilege and I have so much love for this paper and for those who keep it alive. This paper has created in me a powerful lover of writing and poetry and a lover of human connection through experience.

## Changing of the guard

BY AYDEN LEVINE  
PHOTO EDITOR

I hate change. It makes my stomach turn and my head explode. I try to avoid it at all costs. Everyday I wear the same jewelry, I walk the same path to class, I get the same drink at Java's, and I get the same colored plate in dhall (blue, the best plate color.) It doesn't change; everyday is the same.

I've been like this my whole life. I remember at the end of second grade all of the second grade teachers sectioned off our area of the school and made a second grade block party. All of the other second graders were busy having fun and stuffing their faces with cake. Not me. I was too busy crying my eyes out in the arms of my second grade teacher. The same happened in third grade: my teacher showed the end of the year video montage and

I cried silently in my seat while all my classmates excitedly pointed at pictures of themselves they saw.

At the end of each semester, I always get a stomach ache. Things are changing; my daily routine will be different for a while. I remind myself it will just be for a few months, but this time the change is more permanent. My four years at Muhlenberg College are over, and I don't know what's coming next. I won't get stopped 11 times by people I know on Academic Row while trying to get to Seegers, I won't get sweet notes on my Java's drinks from friends who know how to spell my name right, I won't eat my food on my blue dining hall plates.

Photography has been my way to try and control the changes happening around me. I got my DSLR camera for my eighth grade graduation. The first photo I ever took on it was of my little brother

at my graduation lunch. I've continued to use my camera to capture moments like this: frozen memories that are unchanged by the passage of time.

Working as the Photo Editor at the Weekly has allowed me to not only document my own moments at Muhlenberg, but moments belonging to all of my fellow Berg students. I've been able to capture theatre and dance shows, sports games, student acts of service, and most notably the visit of Jill Biden to our campus. These experiences are ones that I wouldn't give up for the world, and I'm so lucky to have received that text my freshman year asking me to join the editorial staff.

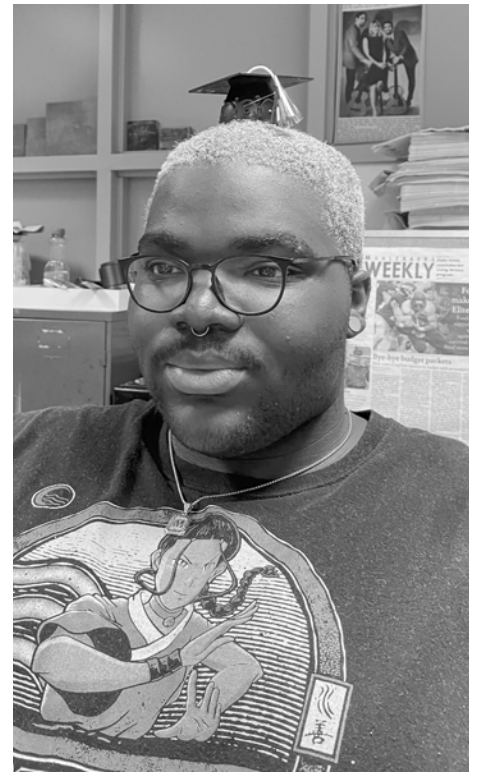
My photos will outlast my time at Muhlenberg. As my memories fade and my distance from 2400 West Chew Street grows, my images will be everlasting on my SD card inside my shiny red camera.



Change is hard, but I'll always keep Muhlenberg with me in my photos.



# CONGRATULATIONS, CLASS OF 2023!



## OPINIONS

### Haven

BY DANNY MILKIS  
A&C EDITOR

After dropping out of the Dublin study abroad program due to my own personal fears about the spread of the pandemic in Ireland at the end of 2022, I was hasty in my effort to find an alternative to the experience I would have had abroad. After all, I was a very career-conscious people-pleaser in my junior year, and missing out on a guaranteed internship proved to put a sizable dent in my perceived security.

So, I did what any paranoid college junior would do, and spent my nights from 11:00 p.m. to 3:30 a.m. filling out applications on Handshake, Indeed, ZipRecruiter and every other job site you could think of. Obsessive? Yes. Did I yield anywhere near the number of responses I had hoped for? Absolutely not.

It seemed like all hope of escaping this vicious cycle was lost, until the very next afternoon, when an email came into my school inbox from an international Christian service organization called The International Order of The King's Daughters and Sons, where a very personable recruiter asked me if I would be interested in sitting down for a virtual interview.

I've never been an overly religious person, per se, and at first, I was admittedly turned off by the idea. Something about the genuineness of his language intrigued me, though, and with an open mind and an open heart, I decided to give the interview a shot, and just two weeks later,

after two very fruitful face-to-face conversations, my mind was changed and I had secured a PR/Social Media Manager internship position with IOKDS, where I would be housed at the organization's international headquarters at the Chautauqua Institution for the majority of the summer of 2022.

The Institution looked absolutely stunning visually, and its history and culture were something even more majestic to behold. Walled off from the world and situated on a picturesque lake, and advertised as the last surviving community of its kind, I would come to find that Chautauqua was almost a proverb in and of itself.

The last surviving place of its kind on earth, and a haven for some people in search of an escape, Chautauqua was designed as an artistic utopia for the sharing of spiritual, cultural and artistic ideas about the world.

When you enter the monolithic gates, and take a walk down the Brick Walk, the first thing you notice is the peculiar design of the houses. Every building, whether administrative or residential, has a large porch, and all throughout the day, the sounds of people happily talking, singing, playing musical instruments and sharing stories can be heard reverberating through every street corner. The internship director explained to me on the

first day that most people emphasize decks in the back of their houses over front porches, and thus will largely keep to themselves, to have privacy. Making every porch in Chautauqua a centerpiece inspires folks to have conversations and connect with their neighbors.

There was no formal security at Chautauqua's various events – even with big-name stars like Jay Leno, Ben Folds and Brian Stokes Mitchell. There were no traffic violations in Chautauqua; cars are not allowed within the grounds, and bikes are made accessible to all visitors, so accidents are less likely and far less dangerous, and the air is clear and free of automobile pollution. All nine religious denominations on the grounds work together on one council, and set their programming so that guests, no matter their affiliation, would have the opportunity to engage with every religious tradition, and setting a model in which each congregation speaks highly of its neighbor congregations and encourages guests to experience it all.

Now I'm no believer in the supernatural, nor the religious, and I never have been, but make no mistake: There is an innate magic within the walls of this place, within its mystifying stone labyrinth and its winding streets and its vast event halls, and I believe, after my summer experience, that every person who enters finds it for a reason, and leaves the grounds healed and changed in some way, just as I did when I returned home at the end of July, my heart full and my spirit renewed.

Then, on the morning of Aug. 12, 2022 – just under two weeks after I had returned home, I opened my phone and my heart sank:

Novelist Salman Rushdie was stabbed repeatedly by an assailant as he gave a speech before the Chautauqua community that very morning.

"It could never happen here," they all said. "Chautauqua—this place is the last

haven in a world where our political leaders, our neighbors, our friends act out of hate." "Here, you can feel like you belong, no matter who you are, or where you came from."

Suddenly, in what seemed like the blink of an eye, the hundreds of years—14 generations of unfettered peace was shattered into a broken mirror of faith, truth and providence. The Institution and its community would never be the same, as security was set to increase tenfold going forward, and increased police presence and protection would be a requirement for the summer 2023 programming.

I visited again during the off-season with my girlfriend, to show her this place that changed my life so many months ago, and what I saw was the aftermath of a day of terror. The porches were empty, save for one quiet, sneering soul, and all that remained were the ghosts of the people who once strummed "The Parting Glass" on banjos and acoustic guitars from their rocking chairs. Police cars and security barriers filled the once-bustling town square, and restaurants and storefronts of beloved Chautauqua novelty shops and restaurants were closed down. Blizzards howled through the nine days and eight nights of our stay, and on our last day, we trekked to the far side of town to find the old stone labyrinth, protected from the snow by a covering of rugged oak trees.

As we approached, I could hear the faint sound of bells from the branches – a wind chime. It was hanging from an extruding branch of one of the tallest trees. We walked the twisting pathway one more time, into the center and back out again, and as we walked back home through the snow-covered gates, the amber sun began to set into the deep blue of Lake Chautauqua.

I turned to my girlfriend, tears in my eyes, and asked if she'd come back with me again.



# THE MUHLENBERG WEEKLY / SPORTS

## A night at Steel Ice

Joey Marcacci '23  
and Louis Cocco  
'23 lead the  
Spartans to victory

BY MAX NIERENBERG  
ROOKIE WRITER

Finals week is quickly approaching at Muhlenberg College. Everyone is stressed and working hard to finish the semester. But Joey Marcacci '23 and Louis Cocco '23 are focused on another set of finals. Both Marcacci and Cocco play for the Spartans, a local team in the Original 6 Hockey League at the Steel Ice Center in Bethlehem. On Wednesday, Apr. 26, the Spartans faced off against their rivals, the Bobcats, in a must-win playoff game which would determine if they would make it to the finals or not.

Muhlenberg is always referred to as a close-knit community and family. The amount of support shown at the game showed why. The atmosphere was electric from the first to final buzzer. Many of Marcacci and Cocco's close friends showed up to support them in a must-win game. Justin Billich '24, when asked about the atmosphere, mentioned that "the match was incredible. Being surrounded by close friends and other Muhlenberg students was surreal and unlike anything else. We made the most of it by playing music during the stoppage, cheering, singing, dancing and, of course, getting in the other team's head a bit."

A wholesome moment in the game came during the second period. It was tied 1-1, and Marcacci was on the breakaway with lots of open ice, scoring a crucial goal for his team. It was an incredible moment because the sea of Muhlenberg students in the crowd were ecstatic and went wild cheering for him. Marcacci's unforgettable moment even included celebrating up against the rattling glass with his friends. It was a pure moment of joy. When asked about that unforgettable moment Marcacci said "the whole game was electric. Being a player on the ice and being able to experience a huge crowd like that is something I will never forget. After scoring on a breakaway the crowd went insane, it was such a cool moment."

During the third period it started to get



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOEY MARCACC '23

The hockey team and its supporters celebrate a win.

a little rowdy on the ice. It was a hard-hitting game and a very close back and forth match between both sides. Nobody was letting up and the thought of playing in the finals was on everyone's mind. With about five minutes left in regulation the Bobcats tied the game up at two apiece. Cocco described how tense the game was when it was all tied up, "The team went out there giving it our all and played really hard, we all knew that it was a must win game, the vibe on the bench and the ice was pretty tense, especially when the game was tied up 2-2. It was such a back and forth game as we scored to make it 1-0 early on, then they scored to tie it up, then we were able to score again, until they tied it up once again a few minutes later."

The last few moments in the game were intense. Within all the chaos, sup-

port continued from Muhlenberg students. The crowd never stopped singing and cheering. They wanted to see their peers win the game. Out of nowhere, in the remaining minutes of the game, the Spartans were able to score the go-ahead goal which would send the team to the finals. It was a moment to remember as the whole place erupted for their Muhlenberg classmates.

After regaining the lead, the Bobcats pulled their goalie for one final attempt. The Spartans capably defended this extra-man attack, while a strong feeling that the game was all but over coursed through the fans and the stands would soon be celebrating a Spartans win. As the final horn sounded emotions ran wild. What should have been an awesome moment turned ugly as Cocco was grabbed from the back by a member of the opposing Bobcats and

a small scuffle unfolded. It was an intense moment but the crowd had Cocco's back and was ready to support him. Recounting his experience watching from the stands, Billich said, "Towards the end of the match, one of the opponent's players hit one of our close friends. It was wild. Then the whole crowd ran down to the action ready to defend our friend and jump into the rink if needed to protect him." It was a moment that really showed how close Muhlenberg students are and how much they care for one another.

After the game finished, all of Marcacci and Cocco's friends waited outside their team's locker room to cheer them on and congratulate the two on the big victory. This included a giant group photo at the end, which was the perfect way to cap off a memory-filled night of hockey and fun.

Coming up this week in

# SPORTS

The Weekly is looking for writers and photographers.  
Interested? Stop by our offices next semester!